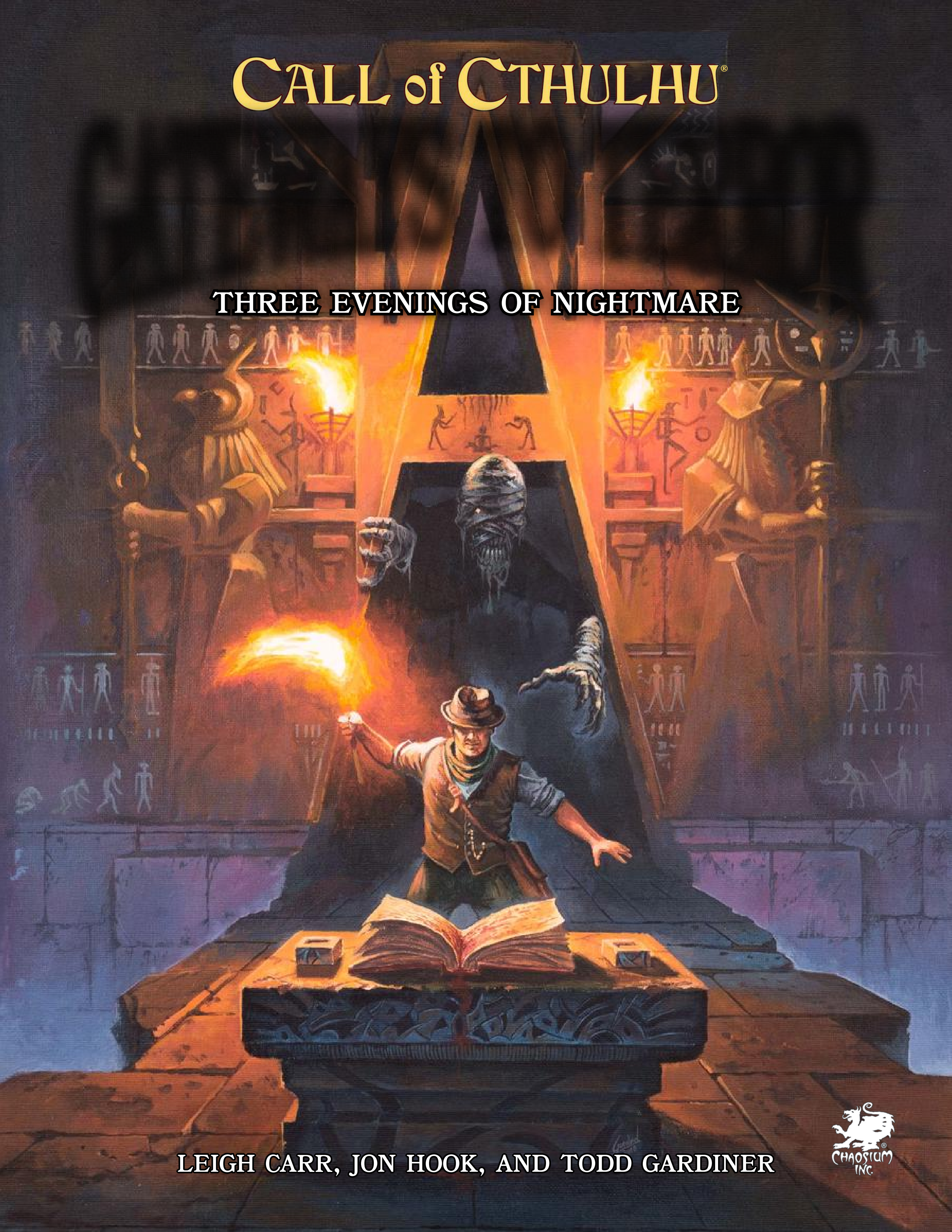

CALL of CTHULHU®

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THREE EVENINGS OF NIGHTMARE

LEIGH CARR, JON HOOK, AND TODD GARDINER

CHAOSIUM INC.

GATEWAYS TO TERROR

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This supplement is best used with the *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game (7th Edition), available separately.

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INTRODUCTION

Three portals to nightmare! Each of the scenarios presented in this book are playable by up to four players in around one to two hours, and are designed to introduce new players to *Call of Cthulhu*. Each focuses on a limited location and timeline, and thrusts the players into the key point of an investigation or mystery.

The three scenarios in this book—*The Necropolis*, *What's in the Cellar?*, and *The Dead Boarder*—all started life as one-hour demonstration games for conventions, each designed to give a taste of the *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game to those who might not have the time (or the confidence) to join a longer game while visiting a convention, club, or games day.

Now collected together in *Gateways to Terror*, the three scenarios are short—so perfect for picking up and playing in a single evening, or as a change of pace between longer campaigns. They're also ideal for novice and experienced Keepers and players alike. And, while all three are stand-alone stories, they could act as the starting point for a new group's own ongoing investigations into the wider world of the Cthulhu Mythos.

All of the scenarios demonstrate the fun of playing *Call of Cthulhu*, as well as presenting key aspects of the game's rules through the story and action they contain. Each introduces the themes and core motifs of the game—investigation, mystery, and horror—as well as showcasing the fun and enjoyment to be had when playing *Call of Cthulhu*.

PREPARATION AND RUNNING THE GAME

As part of getting ready to run the scenarios in this book, you'll need to make sure you're up-to-speed with the *Call of Cthulhu* rules (7th edition), either as presented in the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set* or the core *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*. To help support novice Keepers, each scenario contains advice on moving the story forward, when necessary.

As the Keeper, ensure you have read through and prepared to the run the scenario you've chosen. Remember, the players are looking to you to keep them engaged—this is difficult to do if your head is buried in the text at all times. So, having a good understanding of the setup, the clues to be found, and resultant action helps immensely—although don't worry if you do have to check things during the game—no one expects you to memorize the whole scenario before you start playing! Making a few bullet points on some scrap paper to refer to during the game can be a useful memory aid.

The introduction to each of the three scenarios contains an overview of their structure, along with suggested timings—these are provided to help novice Keepers with pacing—but they aren't hard and fast rules to be adhered to no matter what, and are meant to be flexible. No two groups' games will be the same, or stick to the same time frame, so, if you have more than one or two hours available, or everyone is having fun exploring a particular aspect of the mystery, adjust our suggestions accordingly. Or ignore them completely—remember, this is your game, and you're the best judge of how the story is playing out with your group.

We've tried to organize the information in each scenario so you can quickly go to a section and respond to the investigators' actions accordingly. Describe the information provided (sight, sound, smell, and so on) but then focus back on the players, allowing them to drive the action forward. If they waver, though, be prepared to offer suggestions but try to let them make the decisions. Some players, however, may get stuck investigating unnecessary details and it's your job, as Keeper, to pace the exploration and action, ensuring each player has an equal amount of participation and spotlight time. Build the horror and tension steadily but surely as you move through the scenario, but always bear in mind your audience and take care to tone the content accordingly. If in doubt, it's always a good idea to talk to your players before the game starts to agree the tone of the game; for example,

Opposite: Gateways to terror

whether the group would enjoy gory descriptions or if they'd prefer to keep such details vague.

Prior to play, you should print out the ready-made investigator sheets supplied with each scenario, unless you wish the players to create new investigators. It's always best to let each player choose their character rather than handing out the investigator sheets at random—that way, players start with a higher level of investment in the game, as they'll be portraying someone who piqued their interest, rather than just making do with what they've been given. Each of the scenarios included in *Gateways to Terror* comes with four pre-generated investigators—an ideal number for shorter game sessions. You can play the scenarios with fewer players, but at least two is recommended. Suggestions are given at the start of each scenario in the **About the Investigators** section for potential additional characters if you have more than four. Remember, adding extra investigators tends to increase the length of a game, and if you're a new Keeper, you may want to keep things small until you have a bit more experience. Recommendations for which pre-generated characters to use (if you have fewer than four players) can also be found in the same section. If creating new investigators for these scenarios, refer to the backstories of the pre-generated characters as these are written to ensure a connection to the scenario's plot—you can either simply transfer the backstories to the new investigators or modify them accordingly. Tying in each investigator to the scenario's set up is a good way to make sure everyone has some form of stake in the ensuing events.

One of the key themes of *Call of Cthulhu* is having "regular" people forced into horrific situations. Nevertheless, even though they may apparently face insurmountable odds, their personal heroism can make all the difference. It can even be quite fun to have an investigator (or two…) die in spectacular and hideous ways. Just don't bump them off without good reason; instead, try to make investigator death an interesting and meaningful exit that fits the overall story.

INTRODUCING THE RULES

If you have new players who haven't taken part in a *Call of Cthulhu* game before, you may need to briefly explain some of the rules to them before play begins, dealing with any more in-depth issues or questions as they arise during play. Don't worry too much about explaining all of the rules at the very beginning of the game—just focus on skill rolls, pushing a roll, and Luck spending—there will be plenty of opportunity to go over the rules for Sanity and combat as and when they come up during play. Besides, new players may well find it easier to get to grips with the rules if they are explained a little at a time, as and when they become relevant to what their investigators are doing—rather than having a lot of information dumped on them upfront.

If you have the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, then **Book 2** contains simplified rules ideal for quick reference. For a more detailed description, refer to the core *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, in particular, **Chapters 4 through 9** (along with **Chapter 10** if you're a new Keeper). You can play these scenarios with either the *Starter Set* or full *Keeper Rulebook*.

The Investigator Sheet

If you do have new players, a good place to start is with the investigator sheet. Briefly, talk the players through one of the pre-generated sheets associated with the scenario you've chosen to play, highlighting the following:

- Personal details and their characteristics are at the top of the sheet.
- Hit point, Sanity point, and Luck point boxes come next.
- Skills and their percentage values are in the middle of the sheet.
- Combat skills and weapons are at the bottom of the sheet.
- The investigator sheets also contain useful information on the reversed side, such as backstory entries, gear and possessions, as well as a quick rules reference section they can refer to during the game.

It's also worth pointing out that investigator characteristics, like Strength (STR), Dexterity (DEX), and Intelligence (INT), as well skills, have a value out of one hundred. The higher the number, the better their ability. If the players look at their investigators' skills, the ones with the highest numbers are the things their characters are best at doing.

Keeper note: the default **Language (Own)** skill for most of the pre-generated investigators is English. Encourage the players to change that to something else if it fits their idea of that investigator better; however, remember to check that all of the investigators can still talk to each other if changes are made! We suggest giving everyone 40% in whichever Language (Other) skill makes most sense for that group of investigators, if they don't already have something suitable.

Using Luck

If using the pre-generated investigators provided for each scenario, the players need to determine their Luck values before the game begins. To do so, have them roll 3D6 and multiply the result by 5, then circle the appropriate number in the Luck box on their investigator sheet.

We recommend using the optional **Spending Luck** rule (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 99) when running the three scenarios, as this helps negate poor dice rolls and keep

A group of investigators

the action moving forward—especially important if you've only got a limited amount of time in which to play. These rules are also briefly outlined below for those using the *Starter Set*.

If you do decide to use these rules, besides calling for a Luck roll to determine if the investigators are affected by the fickle hand of fate, the players can also spend their Luck points to adjust dice rolls. Often, this changes a failure into a success, but Luck points can also be spent to alter the degree of success as well (from a Regular to a Hard success, or from a Hard to an Extreme success). To adjust a skill roll (but not a Sanity roll or Luck roll), the player "burns" Luck points, spending the amount necessary to turn a failure into a success (or an increased level of success). For example, if you have Climb 50% but rolled 55 (a failure), you could spend 5 Luck points to adjust the roll to 50 (making it a success). The only limit on Luck spending is amount of current Luck held by the investigator—be aware that should you be asked to make a Luck roll later in the game, you will be rolling against the new lower value! Investigators can regain some of their spent Luck points at the start of a new scenario by rolling against their current Luck value: if they fail the roll, they gain +1D10 points, otherwise, if they succeed in the roll, they gain no points!

Using which investigator has the lowest Luck to determine who a monster attacks first or determining if a weapon or piece of equipment is near at hand, are good ways of helping the players realize that spending Luck is a two-edged sword. And, remember, Luck points cannot be used to adjust a pushed or fumbled roll, a weapon malfunction, damage rolls, Sanity rolls (or rolls to determine how much Sanity is lost), or, obviously, Luck rolls! It's also possible to quite literally run out of Luck, so pacing the use of their Luck points could make all the difference between their investigators surviving an encounter or succumbing to the agents of the Mythos.

Skill Rolls

Some of the clues in each of the scenarios require a successful skill roll to uncover or decipher them. The first time a new player has to make a skill roll, remind them that their skill value is a percentage, so to determine how well their character is doing something, they need to roll percentile dice. If their roll is lower than or equal to their skill value, then they usually pass the test.

This is also an opportunity to explain that there are different degrees of success—**Regular**, **Hard**, and **Extreme**—as indicated by the numbers in the relevant boxes on their investigator sheet. A Regular success is made when the dice result is equal to or under the value recorded in the large box next to the skill's name, but there are an additional two smaller boxes next to the skill number that are also important. The top figure is half the skill number and indicates the value needed for a Hard success. The small number directly below is one-fifth of the Regular skill number and indicates the value needed to gain an Extreme success. Both Hard and Extreme successes usually come with some added benefit—usually more information or a greater degree of damage (if on a combat roll, for example); they are also important when dealing with opposed rolls—see the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, page 14, or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, pages 82–84 for more details. It's also worth pointing out that, sometimes, they may also be specifically asked to make Hard or Extreme skill rolls if the circumstances call for it; these are highlighted in the text of each scenario, where required.

If an investigator fails a skill roll, then they can attempt to **push** the roll, perhaps by taking more time to undertake the task and thereby justifying another attempt; however, if they fail a pushed roll the outcome will be worse (they could end up getting covered in blood, or falling and hurting themselves, for example). Suggestions for appropriate consequences are detailed in each scenario. For more information on pushed rolls, see the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, page 14, or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, pages 84–86. Another way to overcome a failed skill roll is, of course, to spend **Luck** (see above). Lastly, remember to only call for a skill roll when the outcome could be dramatic, and agree what the goal is (what an successful outcome looks like) with the player before making the roll—this sets the stakes and makes sure everyone understands what the roll means in terms of the story.

Bonus and Penalty Dice

There are times where the prevailing conditions may affect an investigator's skill roll. If that is the case, then you may ask the player to roll either a bonus or a penalty die, depending on the situation. For more on bonus and penalty dice, see the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, pages 14 and 15, or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, pages 91 and 92. Suggestions for when to use bonus and penalty dice are mentioned in each scenario.

Remember: if imposing a penalty die, the player must select the worst result from the three D10s they've rolled. If they've been awarded a bonus die, on the other hand, then they get to keep the best possible result instead.

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205-671 MARYLAND 1923

An example of a failed push roll

Combat

When running a combat encounter take time to manage the scene. While such encounters can at first seem a little daunting, with experience you'll become more familiar with how the mechanics work. Remember, everyone involved in combat acts in DEX order (highest to lowest), unless they have a firearm ready, at which point they act at DEX+50. So, the person with the highest DEX acts first in that combat round, and, as soon as everyone has acted, a new round begins. Once a combat starts, go around the table and ask each player what they want their investigator to do. What goal are they trying to achieve? And then, help phrase that in mechanical terms: "*So, you want to shoot the monster? Okay, you need to roll below your Firearms skill*"—and so on.

Melee combat is resolved with opposed skill rolls, usually a Fighting roll of some sort versus either Dodge, the target's own Fighting skill, or a skill roll associated with a maneuver of some sort (depending on whether or not they're trying to get out of the way or fight back). By default, monsters and non-player characters are assumed to always fight back (which makes life easier for you, the Keeper, as well as giving the investigators a slight advantage), unless their description explicitly states they will try to escape. Whoever gets the best degree of success in the opposed roll wins that round of combat and achieves their outcome; they may even be able to inflict a greater amount of damage, too, if they achieve an Extreme success. See the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, pages 18–19 or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, pages 102–112, for more details on melee combat and Extreme damage.

If using firearms, combat plays out slightly differently. You cannot fight back against a bullet, but you can "dive for cover," so someone using a gun makes a straight skill roll to see if they hit, with the difficulty of the roll set by how far away they are from their target and whether the target successfully dived for cover. Various penalty dice may also be applied to the roll depending on the circumstances. See the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, pages 18–20 or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, pages 112–118, for more information on using guns in combat.

Remember, you cannot "push" opposed rolls in combat. Neither can you push Firearms rolls; however, if you are using the optional Luck spending rules (as recommended), investigators may spend Luck points to adjust their attack or dodge rolls. Other special rules relating to combat (such as being outnumbered) can be found in the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, **Chapter 6**. Further guidance also appears in the individual scenarios, where necessary.

An example of hand-to-hand combat

Sanity

As already mentioned, Sanity is a key concept in *Call of Cthulhu*. Sanity points can rise and fall during the course of a game, and Sanity is used to determine whether the investigators can withstand witnessing various horrors, as well as fear-inducing situations, without turning tail and running away.

If you have new players, before you begin a session, you may wish to describe a little more about how Sanity points actually work. Ask the players to look at the circled number on their investigator sheet under the box labeled Sanity—this indicates their investigator's current Sanity points. When asked to make a Sanity roll, in order for their investigator to remain calm and collected, they must roll equal to or under that current score. If they roll above it, they fail the roll and their poor investigator is at risk of losing their hold on rationality. Sanity losses for each roll are mentioned whenever a roll is asked for: for example, (1/1D4), the first number is the Sanity loss if the player succeeds at their Sanity roll; the second number tells you what die to roll to determine the investigator's Sanity loss if they fail their Sanity roll.

The loss of too many Sanity points, either in one go or cumulatively over the course of a scenario, can lead to insanity, either temporarily or indefinitely. If an investigator loses 5 or more Sanity points in one go, they may fall into temporary insanity. If they do, ask their player for an **INT (Intelligence)** roll—if successful they have comprehended the horror and go temporarily insane. You can either use the suggested bout of madness from the **Insane Investigators** boxes in each scenario (if you are using the pre-generated investigators), or you can choose or roll a result from the **Bout of Madness** table instead (*see Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, page 17, or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 157).

It's also quite possible that some of the characters may go indefinitely insane through the accrued loss of one-fifth of their starting Sanity points, if their players are unlucky with their Sanity rolls. In each scenario, the pre-generated investigators' starting Sanity points and the amount they must lose to go indefinitely insane are also listed in the relevant **Insane Investigators** boxes. For more details on Sanity in the game, see the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, pages 16 and 17, or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, **Chapter 8**.

Sanity, and the loss of it, isn't always easy to portray well. The Keeper, using the examples in the **Bouts of Madness** table, should describe how the investigator acts while insane—the player concerned may also offer ideas—just be careful not to let their players derail the rest of the game while insane. Perhaps they gain some form of insane insight into the issue at hand, act in a contrary way to their colleagues, or simply freeze in terror. If you have it, then the *Phobia Deck* from the *Call of Cthulhu Keeper Decks* set has some useful suggestions for how players can characterize bouts of madness and the possible phobias and manias that may result from them. In such details are memorable games made, providing the players with experiences they will want to talk about for years to come, and go on to share with others.

Opposite: The horrors found within this tome

THE NECROPOLIS

Uncover Terrifying Secrets in the Sands of Egypt

The Necropolis is set on Wednesday, November 26th, 1924 in the Valley of the Kings, Egypt—almost exactly two years after Howard Carter discovered the tomb of the boy Pharaoh, Tutankhamen.

INTRODUCTION

In this scenario, the investigators are part of an archaeological dig in the famed Valley of Kings. Events start with a terrible "accident" that seals the investigators inside the entrance to a mysterious tomb. Not only do they need to find a way to escape the burial chamber, but they must also investigate sinister forces while avoiding death at the hands of a crazed and horrific Abomination!

The scenario is intended to outline the importance of accumulating information and the dangers of combat within *Call of Cthulhu* games. By carefully examining their surroundings, a bit of quick thinking, and a touch of luck, the investigators have the best opportunity of reaching the most positive outcome and escape!

SCENARIO STRUCTURE

If you are planning on running *The Necropolis* as a one-hour scenario, then some suggested timings are given below. If you have more than four investigators (or wish to create your own, rather than use the pre-generated ones provided) or are planning on running it as a longer game, then each section after **Start: Imprisoned in the Valley of the Kings** will take around double the time listed here, if not more. These are only suggestions, though, and should be adjusted to best fit your game and the time you have available.

- **Set Up:** the Keeper briefly describes the scenario's premise (**Setting Up**, page 16) and the pre-generated investigators on offer (or the most suitable types if players wish to create their own); if there are new players, they may also need a quick overview of the rules. Players select or create their investigators and introduce them to the rest of the group.
- **Ready to Play:** (5–10 minutes in.) The Keeper confirms the players are ready, then reads or paraphrases the relevant information from **Start: Imprisoned in the Valley of the Kings** (page 16), answering any questions that arise as a result. The investigators become imprisoned within the Necropolis.
- **Discoveries in the Darkness:** (10–30 minutes in.) The investigators begin to explore the Necropolis and accumulate as much information as possible in the hope of finding some means of escape.
- **The Abomination Awakes:** (30–40 minutes in.) An ancient being awakens from its slumber to feast on the trespassers in its tomb (and, potentially, liberate itself from its confinement). Using what they have learned so far, along with some further discoveries, the investigators endeavor to come up with a way of successfully defeating the Abomination and escaping the Necropolis with their lives. The probability of survival is slim (though possible).
- **Conclusion:** (40–50 minutes in.) The investigators defeat the Abomination, escape, or die trying.
- **Epilogue:** the scenario closes with a short epilogue and the Keeper answering any questions the players might have.

Opposite: The Abomination wakes!

ABOUT THE INVESTIGATORS

Four pre-generated investigators are provided for use with *The Necropolis*—each has a reason to be in the Valley of the Kings, be it a thirst for knowledge, fame and recognition, or a steady pay check.

If the players decide they wish to make use of the pre-generated investigators, ensure they read these over before play begins so they can use the information provided to help direct their characters through the scenario. Each investigator, apart from the Ex-Soldier, is gender neutral, allowing the players to decide whether they wish to play a male, female, or non-binary character. A brief description of the pre-generated investigators, and their reasons for being in Egypt, is outlined below.

The Archaeologist

An experienced digger in Egypt, the Archaeologist has been granted sufficient funding for one more season; however, if they don't find something soon, their time in the Land of the Pharaohs will be over.

- **Traits:** they have a passion and drive to succeed in their work, and they crave the fame that a big discovery would bring.
- **Roleplaying hook**: desperate to find something that will keep their career alive.

The Professor of Languages

Although they've spent most of their professional career translating Germanic manuscripts, the Professor's training at University College, London, was in Middle Egyptian hieroglyphics. They are here to help translate any discoveries that might be unearthed at the dig site in the Valley of the Kings.

- **Traits**: eager to finally put their training to good use.
- **Roleplaying hook:** this dig is finally a chance to be part of a major discovery (always good for the career).

The Dilettante

An incredibly wealthy individual with a fascination for all things ancient and valuable. Thanks to their large fortune, they can afford to indulge themselves as they wish and, this year, they're funding a dig in the Valley of the Kings. Well,

Examples of potential investigators

if Lord Carnarvon can do it, why not them? (Although, hopefully, it will end a lot better for them than it did for poor George.)

- **Traits**: driven by a thirst for knowledge and discovering wonderful things.
- **Roleplaying hook**: keen to learn the secrets of the ancient past.

The Ex-Soldier

After being dishonorably discharged from the Army after hitting an officer, the Ex-Soldier has picked up work wherever he could find it. Now he finds himself back in Egypt (having served there during the Great War), offering security to a yet another dig team.

- **Traits**: frustrated by the blemish on his military record and fed up with being stuck in the desert.
- **Roleplaying hook:** the Ex-Soldier needs to impress his boss (the Dilettante) to make sure he's kept on the payroll.

Fewer Than Four Players

If you are using the pre-generated characters but only have two players, then use the Archaeologist and the Professor of Languages. If you have three players, then bring in the Dilettante as well. Having a single player is not recommended for this scenario, but the Professor of Languages is the best investigator to use under these circumstances—if so, increase that character's skills as follows: boost their History to 50%, their Mechanical Repair to 40%, and their Stealth to 50%.

Additional/Alternate Investigators

If your group has more than four players, you will either need to create more pre-generated investigators to expand the number available or help your players to create additional investigators of their own creation. Two possible suggestions for these additional characters are the Crew Chief and the Plucky Kid. The Crew Chief is an experienced Egyptian dig manager used to working with visiting foreign archaeologists and balancing their expectations with the realities on life on site. The Plucky Kid is a staple of many a pulp adventure, so perfectly in keeping with a scenario set in an ancient Egyptian tomb. Perhaps they're a local orphan who attached themselves to either the dig or one of the pre-generated investigators after they arrived in Egypt, or perhaps they are, instead, someone's child (or legal ward). And, so that they're not just there getting under people's feet, perhaps they have a gift for languages or are just good at finding hidden things (or getting into, and out of, tight spots an adult would struggle with).

If, on the other hand, your players want to create their own investigators, or use existing ones, then they need to have a reason to be in the Valley of the Kings. Perhaps they are replacements for one or more of the pre-generated investigators, who haven't been able to make it for some reason. They may even be an associate, complete with letters of introduction. Perhaps they're visiting the site as tourists, or rival scholars, and manage to wangle themselves onto the team of people chosen to be the first to set foot into the newly-opened tomb. Or, perhaps, they simply gate-crash the proceedings, with unfortunate results.

Useful skills for newly created and existing investigators to have for this scenario include: Appraise, Archaeology, Demolitions, First Aid, History, Language (Egyptian Hieroglyphs), Language (German), Listen, Mechanical Repair, Medicine, Navigate, Occult, Spot Hidden, and Track.

Below: Locals can serve as great alternate investigators

SETTING UP

Read aloud or paraphrase the following to your players, setting the scene for the beginning of the scenario (and adjusting as necessary):

November 26th, 1924. You have been working tirelessly with shovel, spade, and trowel in the Egyptian Valley of Kings. The sun beats down upon you as you carefully unveil the façade of an ancient structure cut deep into a cliff face, buried by the sands of several millennia. Your party of contracted laborers works like busy ants and soon a doorway is uncovered. You stand proudly at the top of thirteen steps that descend to an entryway covered by a large stone slab.

Give the players a brief description of the pre-generated investigators that are available (if you've decided to use them) and ask them to pick one each. Then, give the players a chance to read over their chosen investigator and answer any questions they might have about their background or skills. Or, if they've decided to use their own investigators, work with them to create suitable links to Egypt so they have a reason to be present as the tomb is opened (see **Additional/Alternate Investigators**, page 15, for some suggestions). If they haven't already done so, ask them to decide upon names for their investigators. Finally, get them to briefly introduce their characters to the rest of the group. Once done, move on to the **Start: Imprisoned in the Valley of the Kings** section (following).

START: IMPRISONED IN THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS

Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

Under your watchful gaze, the laborers construct a primitive pulley system and hoist the hefty slab blocking the tomb's entrance into the sky. Stale air from the dark hallway invites you inside with a promise of untold treasure. You excitedly rush inside into the darkness—you are mere steps away from fame, fortune, and the discovery of a lifetime! As you all enter the ancient chamber, you hear a cry of alarm from one of the laborers. The stone slab behind you suddenly slams to the ground and you are plunged into total darkness. You are trapped!

Ask the players to make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D2 loss). Explain how the investigators let out an involuntary scream or cry, as they comprehend their situation; or, if they are more experienced, let them come up with appropriate involuntary actions of their own. (Some suggestions for an appropriate involuntary action for each of the pre-generated investigators can be found in the **Insane Investigators** box for this scenario, located on page 22.)

If they are successful, their investigators hear muffled voices coming from the other side of the slab. Ask the players to make a **Listen** roll. If they are successful, their investigators hear some of the laborers laughing, apparently quite pleased with what's happened, while others seem to be angry. It is a chaotic and confusing situation. Did the laborers' actions cause the stone to fall, was it an accident, or was it some unseen force that brought the stone crashing down? More alarmingly, the voices outside seem to fade into silence, leaving the investigators alone in the pitch-black tomb.

If the Listen roll is failed, then the players have the option to either spend Luck (if using the optional Luck spending rule, as recommended; **Using Luck**, page 6) or to describe what they are doing to push the roll, although there are consequences for failing a second time. (**Remember**: you cannot spend Luck to alter a pushed roll.) If a player does fail a pushed Listen roll, their investigator, trying to put their ear against the door slab to better hear what's going on outside, instead slips on some loose stones beneath their feet and smacks their head upon the ground, causing the investigator 1 point of damage.

DISCOVERIES IN THE DARKNESS

Now that they are all alone in the silence of the tomb, invite the players to explore their surroundings. The darkness makes it difficult to navigate far without a light source. The Archaeologist has four candles, each with a burning life of one hour. Naturally, matches only give a few seconds of light, while a lit cigar or cigarette provides no useful light at all.

Keeper note: darkness plays an important role when exploring the Necropolis; the rooms should be described in fragmentary sections as the investigator's candles reveal the ancient secrets within.

The investigators are welcome to experiment with alternative forms of lighting. This may include the use of some kind of rod and an article of clothing to create a torch. A successful **Luck** roll ensures the torch works as planned. Failure may result in mild burns and cause 1 point of damage, at the Keeper's discretion.

Examining the entry chamber reveals several clues, some of which require a successful skill roll to uncover:

No roll needed:

- The stone slab covering the entrance of the Necropolis displays oddly carved sigils.

Occult roll (Regular success):

- The sigils on the stone slab are sealing sigils, used to protect and ward against those who would rob the tomb.

Spot Hidden roll (Regular success):

- There are limestone chips scattered across the floor.

Archaeology roll (Regular success):

- The limestone chips on the floor indicate a prior excavation of the tomb.

The tomb corridor

Areas of Interest

From the entrance chamber, the investigators can reach the five rooms of interest within the Necropolis:

- **The Passageway** (below).
- **The Antechamber** (page 20).
- **The Annex** (page 21).
- **The Burial Chamber** (page 24).
- **The Treasury** (page 24).

THE PASSAGEWAY

The investigators start their proper exploration of the Necropolis in the passageway.

With candles (or torches) lit, the investigators can see into the dark hallway, which looks to be about 25 feet (7.5 m) in length and free of debris. Damaged and faded hieroglyphs can be discerned along the walls. The candlelight highlights cracks running through many of the frescoes. In the darkness, at the end of the passageway, the vague shapes of furniture or similar objects can just be seen.

If the players are hesitant to move on, hint that the air is growing "thin," suggesting that unless they find a way out, they could suffocate.

There are several clues for the investigators to uncover if they decide to study the hieroglyphs in the frescoes:

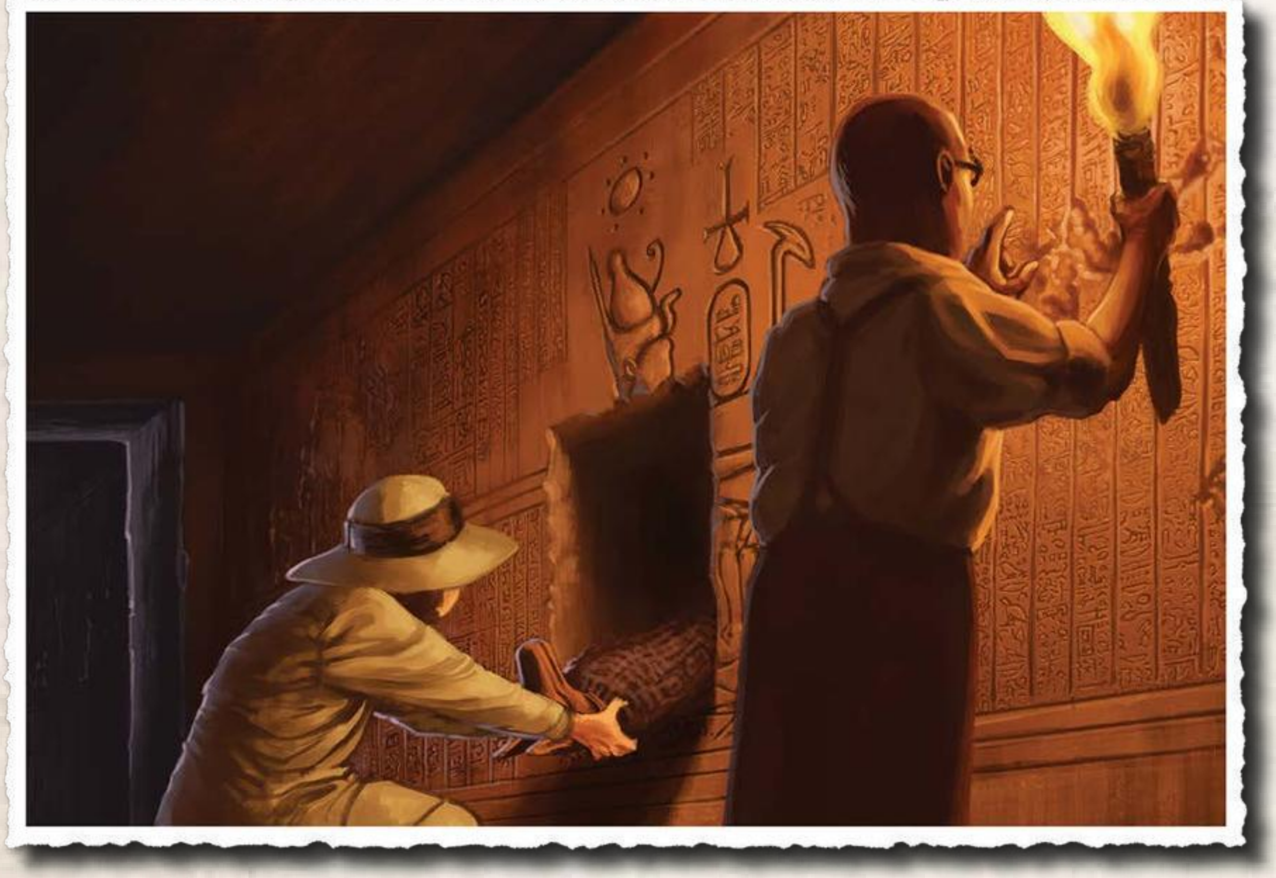
No roll needed:

- There are cracks in the wall, behind which can be seen dark empty spaces.

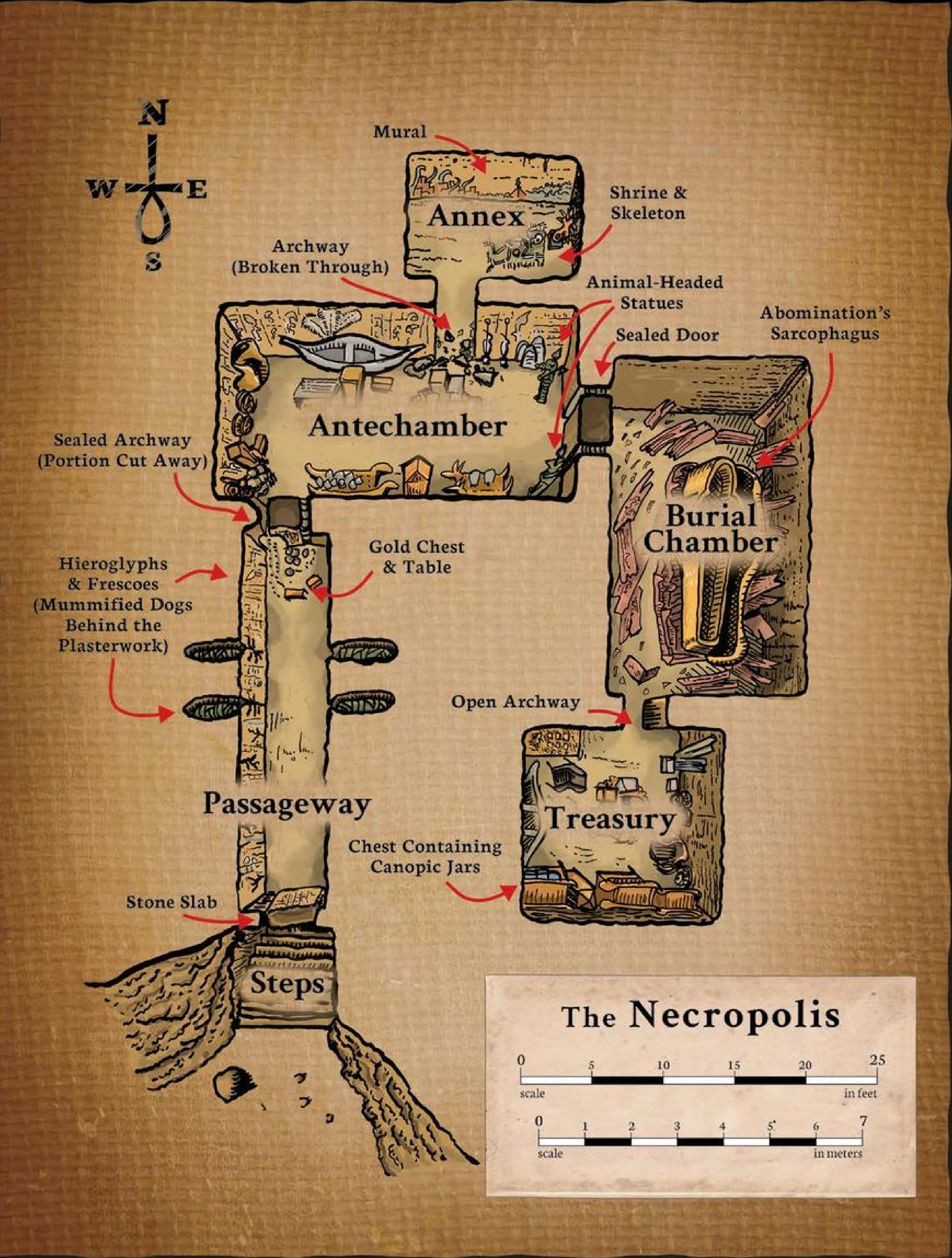
STR roll (Hard success):

- With a bit of effort, a section of the etched façade comes away, revealing small openings 2 feet (60 cm) wide and stretching 4 feet (1.2 m) into the rock wall. Each hole houses a small linen-wrapped package with a painted wooden dog head protruding from the bandages. If the linen wrappings are removed, a mummified dog is revealed. A successful **Archaeology** or **History** roll confirms that the ancient Egyptians often left animals as offerings in shrines dedicated to their gods.

Keeper note: any further **STR** rolls made to tear down other wall sections reveal more mummified dogs. Investigators choosing to continue the destruction risk the passageway collapsing and being forever sealed under the rubble—a successful **INT** roll can deduce this likely outcome, although if they persist, have sections of the ceiling begin to fall on



The passageway
Opposite: The Necropolis map


N
W
E
S
Mural
Annex
Shrine & Skeleton
Archway (Broken Through)
Animal-Headed Statues
Abomination's Sarcophagus
Sealed Door
Antechamber
Sealed Archway (Portion Cut Away)
Burial Chamber
Gold Chest & Table
Hieroglyphs & Frescoes (Mummified Dogs Behind the Plasterwork)
Open Archway
Passageway
Treasury
Chest Containing Canopic Jars
Stone Slab
Steps
The Necropolis
0
5
10
15
20
25
scale
in feet
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
scale
in meters

their heads—ask for a **Dodge** roll to avoid suffering 1D2 damage. Hopefully, that's enough of a warning to get them to stop tearing down the walls and move on—see the following Keeper note for more about this.

Language (Egyptian Hieroglyphs) roll (Hard success):
- The etchings seem to tell a story. They depict a Pharaoh, who appears to possess great powers beyond those of ordinary mortals. The disjointed images on the panels show him smiting those who do not follow him, and that many suffered and perished under his rule.

Language (Egyptian Hieroglyphs) roll (Extreme success):
- As above, but the investigator also learns that the Pharaoh rejected the concept of an afterlife, claiming it held nothing compared to the sights and visions he could unveil in this waking world. His followers would behold the truth while those unworthy would rest with their old gods in an early grave.

At the far end of the passage is a sealed archway, etched with symbols and hieroglyphs similar to those seen on the door slab at the tomb's entrance. Several sections of plaster, a small ornate table, and a golden chest sit in front of the archway. The items seem to have been dragged through a large hole that has been chiseled out from the bottom left-hand corner of the plaster wall (hence the stacked plaster sections). A crouching adult could easily squeeze through the gap and into whatever room lies beyond. The table is considerably rotted. The heavy gold chest is ornately decorated and can be easily opened; it holds a few loose beads. It is clear that the gold chest is priceless but heavy, requiring STR 70 to lift and carry (although two investigators could more easily carry it together).

The investigators really have little choice but to make their way through the hole in the plaster wall and into the room beyond: **The Antechamber**.

Keeper note: as already noted, and despite first appearances, the passageway is unstable and potentially on the verge of collapse. If needed, the Keeper can decide to have a few stones fall from the ceiling, suggesting that a cave-in is imminent, which should quickly move the investigators onwards. If so, allow the investigators to safely scramble into the antechamber through the hole in the plasterwork. Indeed, the possibility of a cave-in may be used by the Keeper for every location within the Necropolis to create a sense of urgency and to speed up the game as needed; it may also be exploited by the investigators as they attempt to escape the Abomination (**Cave-in**, page 25).

THE ANTECHAMBER

The investigators enter a room filled to the brim with stacks of treasures that reach almost to the ceiling: a couch, chairs, tables, stone tablets, statuettes, musical instruments, tapestries, vases, sealed jars (containing the remains of food, spices, and grain), bowls, ostrich-feather fans, and chests (filled with jewelry, trinkets, and combs). A chariot made of gold stands in the northwest corner of the room along with a rowboat.

To the east, a huge stone slab blocks an archway to what is probably another chamber. On either side of the slab, two large statues seem to stand guard. Across the room, to the north, an open archway leads to yet another room—the annex. It is evident that the plaster wall sealing this archway has been completely demolished, and bits of it lie scattered on the floor around the entrance.

Searching the antechamber uncovers the following:

Archaeology roll (Regular success):
- None of the items in this antechamber bear any resemblance to a known period of Egyptian history.

Appraise roll (Regular success):
- The gold items and stone tablets stored here would command a very high price in private sales.

Spot Hidden roll (Regular success):
- Some of the items have been broken, as if someone had moved through here quickly and with little regard to their surroundings.

Keeper note: with so many items strewn about, investigators wishing to hide in the antechamber gain a bonus die to Stealth rolls.

Taking a closer look at the sealed doorway (that leads to **The Burial Chamber**) reveals that the two large statues on either side of the entrance are actually mummified men impaled on long spears to hold them upright. As if that wasn't gruesome enough, their heads have been replaced: one with that of a crocodile and the other with that of a jackal. Discovering these horrifying mummifications calls for a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

Both "guards" are holding weapons. The crocodile-headed man holds a bronze Egyptian battle-axe and the jackal-headed man holds a sickle-like sword, known as a *khopesh*. Both weapons are in relatively good condition if a little tarnished with age—they could be wielded by the investigators, inflicting 1D6+1+DB damage each.

The heavy stone slab blocking the entrance to **The Burial Chamber** is massive and clearly impossible to move with only their bare hands, even if the investigators team up to attempt it.

THE ANNEX

Compared to **The Antechamber**, this room is modestly filled with religious artifacts. The walls are lined with 3 inch (8 cm) high funerary cones made from clay. On the southern and northern walls are two large murals, while at the eastern wall is a shrine on which stands an inverted 5 foot (1.5 m) tall golden ankh. Hundreds of golden tendrils reach out from the symbol. While the tentacles are motionless, they nevertheless give the impression of movement and are distinctly unsettling to look at. A successful **History**, **Language (Egyptian Hieroglyphs)**, or **Occult** roll identifies the ankh as a symbol that represents life; however, the inverted aspect and the reaching tentacles speak of willful desecration and malign intent.

A large mat lies at the shrine's base, on which sprawls a human skeleton clothed in decaying tatters. Beside the corpse are a satchel and a small sack.

Searching the shrine and the corpse reveals the following:

No roll needed:

- The shrine holds countless pieces of ancient incense in small compartments honeycombed throughout its base. Nearly one hundred tiny statues of men stand around the base of the shrine. A successful **Archaeology** roll identifies the tiny figures as shabti—small funerary statuettes intended to act as slaves in the afterlife.
- The skeleton's ribs are crushed and the skull is fractured; one or both injuries likely lead to the individual's death. A successful **First Aid** or **Medicine** roll not only puts the date of death to within the last ten years, but also notices that there are small indentations in the bones (similar to animal teeth marks).
- The small sack next to the body is filled with gold and bronze jewelry. A successful **Appraise** roll reveals that one person could easily live off the contents of the sack for the remainder of their life.
- The satchel contains a trowel, a flask half filled with fetid water, a German passport, a stick of dynamite, and a leather-bound journal written in German. The passport belongs to a Sascha Karner, born August 2nd, 1880, place of residence: Berlin.

Language (German) roll (Regular success):

- Deciphers the contents of the leather-bound journal. There are entries dated from 1910 to 1916 describing Sascha Karner's time as an anthropologist. It also outlines his trip to Egypt and his attempts to unearth ancient Egyptian artifacts. In addition, Karner writes about his English companion, an archaeologist named Dr. Gerald Sutton. There are many entries outlining the difficult work environment due to the Great War, and Karner often praises Sutton for his assistance in dealing with the English authorities. The last four entries appear to be the most significant—give the player whose investigator made the translation **Handout: Necropolis 1**.

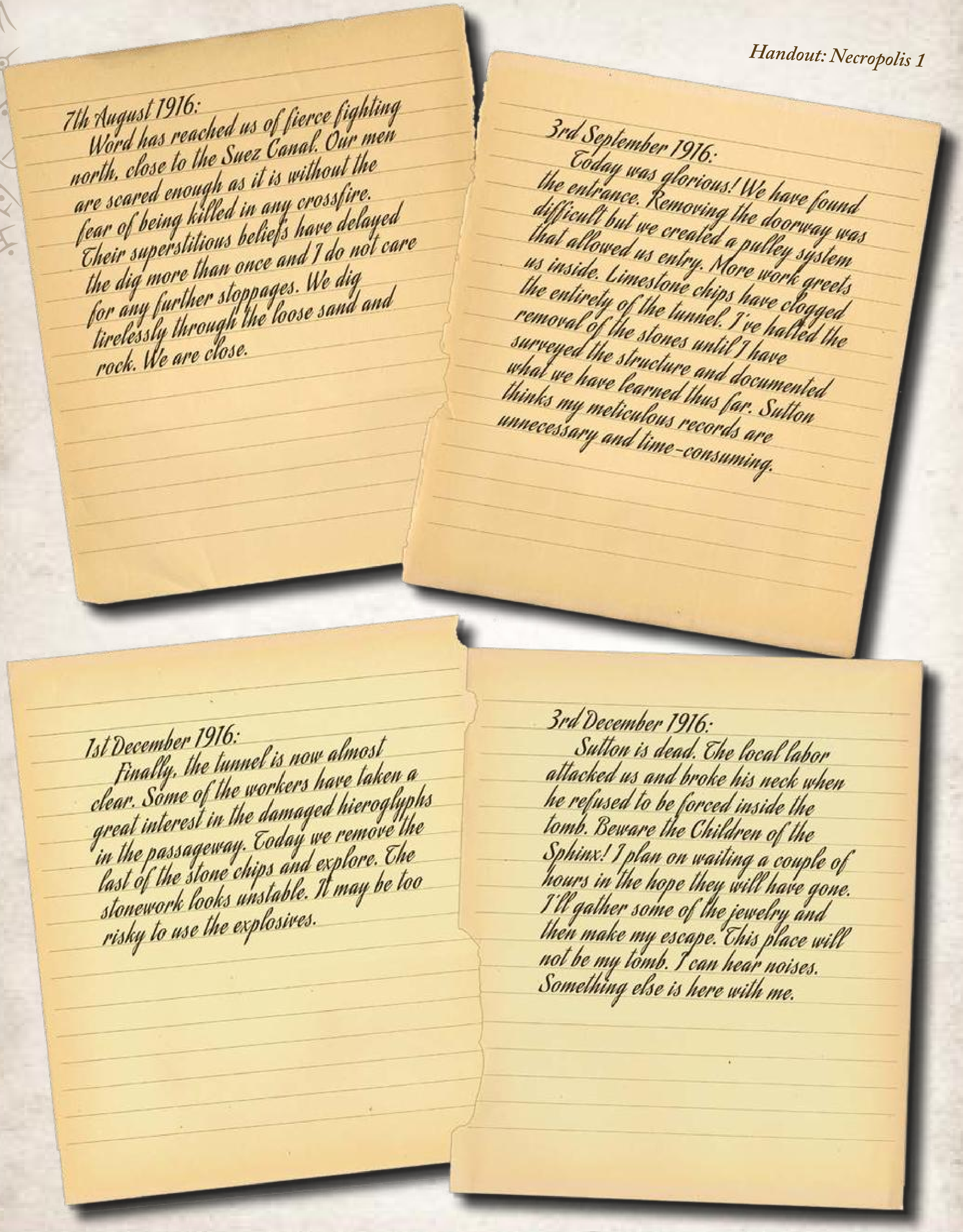
The mural on the southern wall depicts a large painting of a smiling, black-robed pharaoh holding an oversized set of scales, on which a heart is being weighed against a platter of dead animals. A kneeling figure, with the head of a wolf, has a chest wound that is being stretched open by two small men (identical to the shabti figurines). There are some hieroglyphs below the painting. A successful **Archaeology**, **History**, or **Occult** roll identifies that the kneeling dog-headed figure may be the representation of an Egyptian god, either Anubis or Set. The scene shares similarities to the Weighing of the Heart ceremony, where the gods judged if a person could enter the afterlife. If a Hard success is achieved, the investigator believes the deceased animals on the scale are representations of other powerful Egyptian gods; thus, the image may be a form of ceremonial perversion or desecration.

A successful **Language (Egyptian Hieroglyphs)** roll translates the writing on the wall: "*The trial has been passed. Forever they shall be tied to this earth through their faithful beating heart, strong of body, awaiting the return of their master.*" (This is a clue to the nature of the Abomination, and a possible way of defeating it, although the investigators don't know that yet; see **The Treasury**, page 24).

The mural on the northern wall depicts a sickening scene of an Egyptian city being attacked by an army of horrific beings. There are two notable types of creature: those with the bodies of men and the heads of animals, who wield various weapons, and those with the bodies of animals and the heads of men. (A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll identifies these hideous creatures as the Children of the Sphinx, as referred to in Karner's journal.) Black tendrils burst from the ground and sky, tearing the city and its occupants apart. Some of the creatures eat corpses that have been laid upon tables, while others frolic in the chaos. A pharaoh, robed entirely in black, is depicted with an impossibly dark face and seated atop a pyramid-like throne borne by the hybrid monsters; he is being carried through the horrific scene. Investigators viewing the mural should make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss).

A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll when looking at either of the two murals identifies the robed figure as the Black Pharaoh, an avatar of the Crawling Chaos, Nyarlathotep.

Handout: Necropolis 1



7th August 1916:
Word has reached us of fierce fighting north, close to the Suez Canal. Our men are scared enough as it is without the fear of being killed in any crossfire. Their superstitious beliefs have delayed the dig more than once and I do not care for any further stoppages. We dig tirelessly through the loose sand and rock. We are close.

3rd September 1916:
Today was glorious! We have found the entrance. Removing the doorway was difficult but we created a pulley system that allowed us entry. More work greets us inside. Limestone chips have clogged the entirety of the tunnel. I've halted the removal of the stones until I have surveyed the structure and documented what we have learned thus far. Sutton thinks my meticulous records are unnecessary and time-consuming.

1st December 1916:
Finally, the tunnel is now almost clear. Some of the workers have taken a great interest in the damaged hieroglyphs in the passageway. Today we remove the last of the stone chips and explore. The stonework looks unstable. It may be too risky to use the explosives.

3rd December 1916:
Sutton is dead. The local labor attacked us and broke his neck when he refused to be forced inside the tomb. Beware the Children of the Sphinx! I plan on waiting a couple of hours in the hope they will have gone. I'll gather some of the jewelry and then make my escape. This place will not be my tomb. I can hear noises. Something else is here with me.

THE ABOMINATION AWAKES!

The Abomination comes to life after 30–40 minutes (approximately), depending on the length of your game. By this time, the investigators should have had sufficient opportunity to explore both the antechamber and the annex.

The investigators hear a muffled scraping sound (the Abomination's sarcophagus lid sliding open) and then a loud, heavy clang (the lid hitting the ground). A few minutes later, heavy footsteps echo around the tomb. A successful **Listen** roll detects the noises are coming from behind the sealed doorway in the antechamber.

Allow the investigators time to react and have a brief conversation to discuss their plan of action.

The Abomination exits the burial chamber by moving the heavy stone door with its incredible strength. If the investigators are up close and witness the Abomination's emergence, call for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss); otherwise, in the darkness, reduce the Sanity loss to 0/1D3. See the Abomination's profile in the **The Monster** section on page 26 for further details on its tactics and statistics.

If an investigator loses 5 or more Sanity points in one go as a result of seeing the Abomination, they may fall into temporary insanity (see the **Sanity** section in the **Introduction**, page 11). If they do, you can either use the suggested involuntary actions and bouts of madness from the **Insane Investigators** box (nearby) if you are using the pre-generated investigators, or you can roll or select a result from the standard **Bout of Madness** table (*Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, page 17, or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook,* page 157).

Keeper note: some of the pre-generated investigators may even become indefinitely insane at this point—see the **Insane Investigators** box (nearby) for each of the pre-generated investigators' starting Sanity points and the amount they must lose to do so.

Once the Abomination has opened the burial chamber, the investigators have access inside and also to treasury room beyond—if they can avoid the monster with cunning (a successful **Stealth** roll) or running hell-for-leather (a successful **DEX** roll). If in combat, an investigator must succeed at a **Dodge** roll to get past the monster and into **The Burial Chamber**.

Keeper notes:

- The investigators may want to shoot in the direction of the Abomination's silhouette (i.e. into the darkness); if so, ensure a penalty die is added to the Firearms roll.
- If holding a lit candle while engaging in melee combat, impose a penalty die on the investigator's attack roll. Also, impose a penalty die if fighting in total darkness.
- Use the outnumbered rule for combat—multiple investigators attacking a single creature gain a bonus die to their individual attacks, possibly giving them an edge.

INSANE INVESTIGATORS

Each investigator's starting Sanity points and the number of points they must lose to succumb to indefinite insanity are given below. Possible involuntary actions and bouts of madness for either temporary or indefinite insanity are also provided (each bout of madness lasts for 1D10 rounds).

Archaeologist

- **SAN:** 40
- **Indefinite insanity:** at 8+ points.
- **Involuntary action:** faints for 1 round.
- **Bout of madness:** pyromania, a compulsion to start fires. "*Fire will cleanse this tomb of evil!*"

Professor of Languages

- **SAN:** 60
- **Indefinite insanity:** at 12+ points.
- **Involuntary action:** screams something in a foreign language.
- **Bout of madness:** hysterical outburst, incapacitated from screaming. "*Aarrrgghhh!*"

Dilettante

- **SAN:** 70
- **Indefinite insanity:** at 14+ points.
- **Involuntary action:** attempts to grab the nearest object to use as protection, however inappropriate it might be.
- **Bout of madness:** flees in panic. "*Help! Save me!*"

Ex-Soldier

- **SAN:** 50
- **Indefinite insanity:** at 10+ points.
- **Involuntary action:** throws whatever they are holding at the nearest target (be they friend or foe).
- **Bout of madness:** explodes in a spree of uncontrolled violence. "*You'll never take me alive!*"

The outnumbered rule only applies to melee attacks and not to gunfire (*Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, page 20, or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 108). Also, be aware that this is very close quarters. Anyone with a gun is firing at point-blank range (and likely firing into melee). Reviewing the firearm rules before play begins is highly recommended (*Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, page 19, or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook,* page 113).

THE BURIAL CHAMBER

A large sarcophagus almost fills this room. Seven wooden outer shell casings have been torn apart—their splintered remains lie strewn about—revealing an open sarcophagus made of gold. A pair of wooden oars stands in the far corner of the chamber.

Keeper note: the oars could be used as makeshift weapons with the **Fighting (Brawl)** skill, inflicting 1D6+DB damage.

If the wooden outer cases are examined, painted scenes of atrocious and blasphemous sacrificial ceremonies can be discerned on the larger pieces of wood. Figures are depicted embalming screaming men and women. The scenes are horrific and include people being used as fuel for ceremonial fires. Call for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss). The inner golden sarcophagus is very large and shaped like a sleeping figure. The lid has an image of the face of a man screaming in agony.

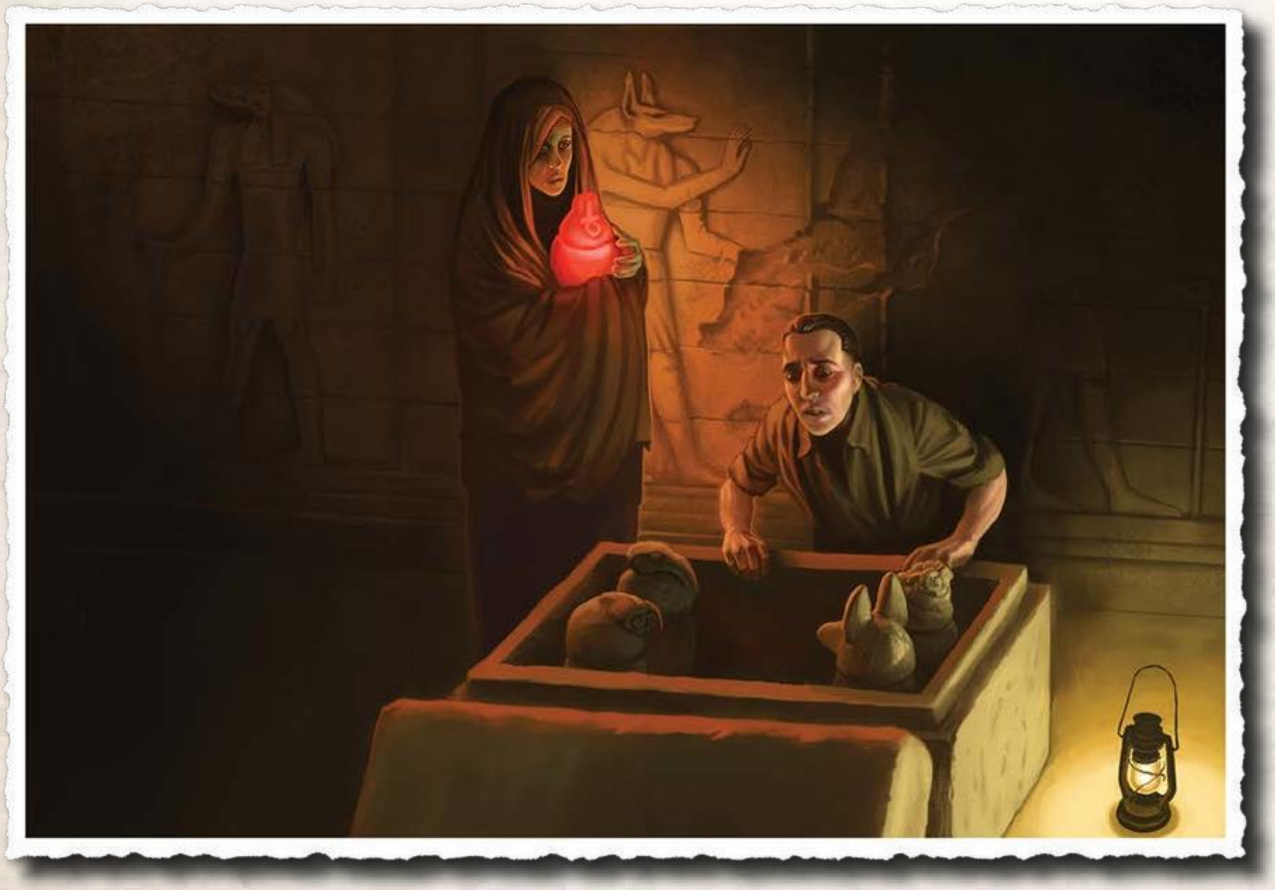
To the south is an archway leading into darkness (to **The Treasury**).

THE TREASURY

This room is also filled with an assortment of treasures: fragile artwork, sculptures, ceramics, small boats and chariots made from gold, and even a model of an entire Egyptian city.

Searching amongst the items calls for a **Spot Hidden** roll to detect a stone chest hidden from view. If approached, ask for a Hard **Listen** roll to see if the investigators can hear a beating sound coming from within the chest.

The chest can be opened with a successful **STR** roll. Inside, there are five canopic jars, each carved from limestone; four are topped with an animal head: a falcon, a crocodile, an ibis, and a wolf. The fifth has a carved inverted ankh jutting up from its lid.



The treasury

Archaeology roll (Regular success):

- Confirms jars like these were used to store the internal organs of those who underwent mummification.
- Traditionally, there would be only four canopic jars.

Archaeology roll (Hard success):

- As above, plus: even ignoring the fifth, inverted ankh canopic jar, the lids of the other jars are pretty much all "wrong."
- The jar containing the lungs typically has a baboon head; that containing the stomach is usually topped with a jackal's head; a human head is on the lid of the jar containing the liver; and the final jar (containing the intestines) is topped with a falcon's head.
- Of all the jars, only the falcon-headed one looks correct, although the wolf one is fairly close.

The four mostly normal jars contain the ancient dried remains of the Abomination's internal organs (lungs, stomach, liver, and intestines); however, if the jar with the inverted ankh is handled, a distinct "pulse" can be felt from within. Opening the jar reveals the Abomination's beating heart—call for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss). Destroying the fragile organ destroys the Abomination. If the investigators translated the hieroglyphs below the mural in **The Annex** (page 21), permit them an **INT** roll to remember what the inscription said, if the players don't remember of their own accord. Hopefully, recalling this information should give them a clue as to their best course of action.

CONCLUSION

A selection of possible conclusions follows—adjust and tailor the scenario's ending to fit the investigators' actions.

Eaten by the Abomination

One way or another, the investigators are unsuccessful in defeating the Abomination and are all killed. Their remains provide a tasty feast for the creature which, once sated, goes back to sleep until its worshippers bring it another unwitting sacrifice. It is too full and too drowsy to attempt an escape—this time.

Explosion

The investigators may decide to use the dynamite found in Karner's satchel (**The Annex**, page 21) to destroy the Abomination. If the dynamite explodes in any location other than in front of the stone slab blocking the entrance to the tomb (see **Escape**, below), the entire Necropolis collapses. No one survives the resulting cave-in, including the Abomination.

Cave-in

The Abomination clumsily destroys one of the Necropolis' supporting walls as it blunders after the investigators, causing the entire structure to collapse. All inside are killed. This option if useful if you need to bring the game to a speedy conclusion. It is possible that the investigators may also attempt to bring the roof down on the Abomination by causing a deliberate rock fall in the passageway, if they know how structurally unstable it is (**The Passageway**, page 18). If they do, then permit them a **Luck** roll to see if they survive the initial collapse. They're still trapped, though…

Slay the Abomination

Getting into combat with the Abomination is dangerous due to the potential amount of damage it can deal in one blow. Remind the players to spend Luck points during combat to increase their chances of success. Destroying the Abomination's heart in the canopic jar is the surest way to defeat the monster (**The Treasury**, above)—if the investigators can make it past the creature and uncover its secret before it has a chance to rip them limb from limb.

Escape

The investigators may carefully use Karner's dynamite (**The Annex**, page 21) to demolish the stone door at the entrance with a successful **Demolitions**, **Mechanical Repair,** or Hard **Know** roll. Proper precaution and preparation are needed to demolish the stone door, taking approximately three rounds to ensure it is done safely. In the unlikely event investigators manage to keep the Abomination at bay while preparing the dynamite, light the fuse, and get to a safe distance, the investigators flee the Necropolis while the Abomination is crushed beneath cave-in triggered by the explosion.

A Creative Escape

Investigators may position themselves strategically in front of the tomb's entrance and entice the Abomination to blindly charge head first toward them in a fit of rage. If the investigators can succeed with a **Dodge** roll, they jump clear at the last moment: the Abomination breaks through the stone door, providing an escape route. If the Dodge roll is failed, the investigator is hit by the monster and crushed to a pulp as it rams both itself and them through the stone slab, allowing the unfortunate investigator's companions to escape thanks to their heroic sacrifice. The Abomination knocks itself unconscious for 1D6 rounds. What the investigators decide to do with the unconscious monster is up to them.

Abomination Escapes

If it escapes, the Abomination sprints into the desert and out of sight in moments. Allow the investigators to make a **Navigate** roll to find their way to the nearest settlement, or they can attempt a **Track** roll to follow the laborers' footsteps. In a few days, newspapers carry reports of victims mauled to death by a large animal—the investigators, knowing they are responsible for the Abomination's escape and killing spree, lose 1D8 Sanity points for this outcome.

REWARDS

Each surviving investigator receives +1D6 Sanity points if they manage to escape from the confines of the tomb.

EPILOGUE

Don't forget to wrap up the scenario with a short summary of what's happened. You may wish to highlight any stand-out moments, as well as the potential long-term consequences for each investigator—should any of them survive…

THE MONSTER

The Abomination, *creature of the Necropolis*

The actions of the investigators have woken the Abomination from its slumber. Long has it waited for the return of its master, the Black Pharaoh—Nyarlathotep! And while today is not that day, it is hungry and must feed.

The Abomination is a huge muscular man draped in decaying linen. Its skin is slick with pus and bile, which pours out through large open sores. Its head is that of a large African golden wolf, whose eyes glow red with a burning and maddening hatred for all life. It often crouches down and walks on all fours, sniffing the air, and making panting and growling noises, while at other times it walks on two legs and emits a blood-chilling roar.

The Abomination's strength is incredible; it can easily crush a man with a single blow. The creature's weakness is its heart, which is stored in a canopic jar in **The Treasury** (page 24). If the heart is destroyed, pus and bile erupt from within the creature, spraying everything in sight (provoking a Sanity roll; 1/1D3 loss), and leaving behind nothing but a dried-out mummified husk.

STR 200 **CON** 80 **SIZ** 90 **DEX** 35 **INT** 15
APP — **POW** 75 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 17
DB: +3D6 **Build:** 4 **Move:** 10 **MP:** 15

Special Powers

Able to see clearly in any dark environment.
Attacks per round: 1 (punch, smash, or *khopesh*)

Fighting: the Abomination has two goals: to satiate its hunger with fresh human flesh and to be free of its tomb. Once it emerges from **The Burial Chamber**, it makes its way to the entrance **Passageway**, attacking any investigators it finds in its path. If it hears the investigators, it heads toward them instead, pursuing them so that it may satisfy its hunger. If its prey becomes too difficult to catch, it relents and resumes making its way to **The Passageway**. As it moves through the Necropolis toward the entrance, it clumsily breaks and topples items in its path, providing the investigators with an early warning that they are not alone (i.e., if they haven't gone to investigate the sound of it emerging from the burial chamber). If cornered, it fights to the death; otherwise, it seeks to escape the tomb, raging in anger when it finds the stone slab is blocking its escape—it is left to the Keeper to determine whether the Abomination does eventually break free of the tomb, and what horrors then follow.

Fighting	80% (40/16), damage 3D6
Khopesh	80% (40/16), damage 1D6+3D6
Dodge	17% (8/3)

Sanity loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see the Abomination (reduce to 0/1D3 if in darkness).

Name:

Archaeologist, *age 36*

STR 60	**CON** 50	**SIZ** 50	**DEX** 50	**INT** 70
APP 60	**POW** 40	**EDU** 80	**SAN** 40	**HP** 10
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 8	**Luck:**

Luck: *roll 3D6 and multiply result by five.*

Combat

Fighitng (Brawl)	25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Skills

Appraise	60% (30/12)
Archaeology	70% (35/14)
Climb	40% (20/8)
Credit Rating	40% (20/8)
Drive Auto	40% (20/8)
Firearms (Handgun)	20% (10/4)
First Aid	30% (15/6)
History	60% (30/12)
Jump	20% (10/4)
Language (Arabic)	50% (25/10)
Language (English)	80% (40/16)
Library Use	50% (25/10)
Listen	20% (10/4)
Mechanical Repair	40% (20/8)
Navigate	40% (20/8)
Persuade	50% (25/10)
Spot Hidden	50% (25/10)
Stealth	20% (10/4)
Throw	20% (10/4)

Backstory

Recently, you have had the good fortune of being privately funded to work in Egypt. After a long time with no notable findings, you have been granted only one more season of work, with an expectation that you produce results or else your funding will be pulled. The good news is that your current dig seems to be the answer to your prayers, as you have uncovered an ancient stone path leading into a cliff face. You and your companions could be on the verge of a big and career-making discovery!

- **Traits:** you have a passion and drive to succeed in your work, and you crave the fame that a big discovery would bring.
- **Ideology/Beliefs**: you're not sure you share the ancient Egyptians' belief in an afterlife.
- **Meaningful Location:** Egypt—where else? The scene of so many triumphs, but also so much disappointment.

Roleplaying hooks

If you don't find something this time, your career is pretty much over—so find something.

Possessions

A satchel containing a trowel, small brush, matches, and four candles.

Player Notes:

Name:

Professor of Languages, *age 40*

STR 50	**CON** 40	**SIZ** 50	**DEX** 45	**INT** 60
APP 70	**POW** 60	**EDU** 80	**SAN** 60	**HP** 9
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 12	**Luck:**

Luck: roll 3D6 and multiply result by five.

Combat

Fighting (Brawl)	25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Skills

Anthropology	50% (25/10)
Charm	30% (15/6)
Climb	20% (10/4)
Credit Rating	40% (20/8)
Firearms (Handgun)	20% (10/4)
First Aid	30% (15/6)
Jump	20% (10/4)
Language (Egyptian Hieroglyphs)	70% (35/14)
Language (English)	80% (40/16)
Language (German)	60% (30/12)
Language (Latin)	50% (25/10)
Library Use	60% (30/12)
Listen	40% (20/8)
Mechanical Repair	10% (5/2)
Psychology	50% (25/10)
Occult	25% (12/5)
Stealth	20% (10/4)
Spot Hidden	45% (22/9)
Throw	20% (10/4)

Backstory

Years of studying Egyptian hieroglyphics at University College, London have surprisingly limited occupational opportunities despite the international renown of some of your former tutors. Consequently, you have spent most of your professional career translating Germanic documents (another language for which you have a natural flair). Now you have the chance to work on something really worthwhile. You have been summoned to Egypt to a new dig that promises to unearth some fabulous finds.

- **Traits:** eager to finally put your training to good use.
- **Ideology/Beliefs**: you believe in yourself—whatever life throws your way, you can handle it. Probably.
- **Treasured Possessions**: a signed copy of *Ancient Egyptian Legends* by your former tutor, Margaret Murray.

Roleplaying hooks

This dig is finally a chance to be part of a major discovery (which is always good for the career). Then, perhaps, people will employ you for your first love: hieroglyphics.

Possessions

Beef jerky, pen and pencils, writing pad, cigar and matches.

Player Notes:

Name:

Dilettante, *age 44*

STR 50	**CON** 40	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 60	**INT** 50
APP 50	**POW** 70	**EDU** 80	**SAN** 70	**HP** 10
DB: none	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 14	**Luck:**

Luck: roll 3D6 and multiply result by five.

Combat

Fighting (Brawl)	25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Skills

Art/Craft (Painting)	30% (15/6)
Climb	30% (15/6)
Credit Rating	70% (35/14)
Fast Talk	25% (12/5)
Firearms (Handgun)	20% (10/4)
Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun)	50% (25/10)
First Aid	30% (15/6)
Intimidate	60% (30/12)
Jump	20% (10/4)
Law	25% (12/5)
Language (English)	80% (40/16)
Library Use	50% (25/10)
Listen	30% (15/6)
Locksmith	20% (10/4)
Mechanical Repair	10% (5/2)
Navigate	10 (5/2)
Occult	60% (30/12)
Persuade	30% (15/6)
Psychology	10% (5/2)
Ride	50% (25/10)
Spot Hidden	45% (22/9)
Stealth	40% (20/8)
Throw	20% (10/4)

Backstory

A noble of the British Empire, your great wealth means that you have been able to pursue your studies without the need to work. Spurred by your fascination with all things ancient, you funded an archaeological dig in Egypt, hoping to uncover priceless artifacts and hidden lore. You are excited, as your dig team believes they have found the entrance to a previously unknown necropolis.

- **Traits:** driven by a thirst for knowledge and wonderful things.
- **Ideology/beliefs**: there is more out there than man is currently aware of, both literally and metaphysically.
- **Treasured Possessions**: your cigarette case—a gift from a former, much missed lover.

Roleplaying hooks

Seek out of the secrets of ancient civilizations—what wonders could you learn?

Possessions

Water flask, pocketknife, ink pen, notebook, matchbook, cigarette case.

Player Notes:

Name:

Ex-Soldier, *age 29*

STR 80	**CON** 60	**SIZ** 70	**DEX** 65	**INT** 55
APP 40	**POW** 50	**EDU** 50	**SAN** 50	**HP** 13
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 10	**Luck:**

Luck: roll 3D6 and multiply result by five.

Combat

Fighting (Brawl)	70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D4 or knife 1D8+1D4
.32 revolver	60% (30/12), damage 1D8
Dodge	50% (25/10)

Skills

Climb	40% (20/8)
Credit Rating	20% (10/4)
Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun)	45% (22/9)
First Aid	50% (25/10)
Intimidate	40% (20/8)
Jump	20% (10/4)
Language (English)	50% (25/10)
Listen	20% (10/4)
Mechanical Repair	40% (20/8)
Natural World	30% (15/6)
Navigate	30% (15/6)
Psychology	10% (5/2)
Spot Hidden	45% (22/9)
Survival (Desert)	50% (25/10)
Stealth	50% (25/10)
Throw	20% (10/4)
Track	30% (15/6)

Backstory

You fought in Egypt during the Great War. You were dishonorably discharged from the Army due to an incident with an officer that ended in fisticuffs. But fighting is all you know and now you've gained the only employment you can muster—landing you straight back in Egypt, providing support at archaeological digs in the Valley of Kings. Despite the heat and the flies, the pay is good.

Word has reached you that the Archaeologist has found a tomb and your latest employer, the Dilettante, has arrived on site for the grand unveiling. You'd better look sharp and go see what's happening.

- **Traits:** frustrated by the blemish on your military record and fed up with being stuck in the desert.
- **Ideology/beliefs**: in the end, the only person you can rely on is yourself.
- **Significant People**: your former Army mates, although you haven't seen them in such a long time.

Roleplaying hooks

You need to impress the boss to ensure they keep you on the payroll.

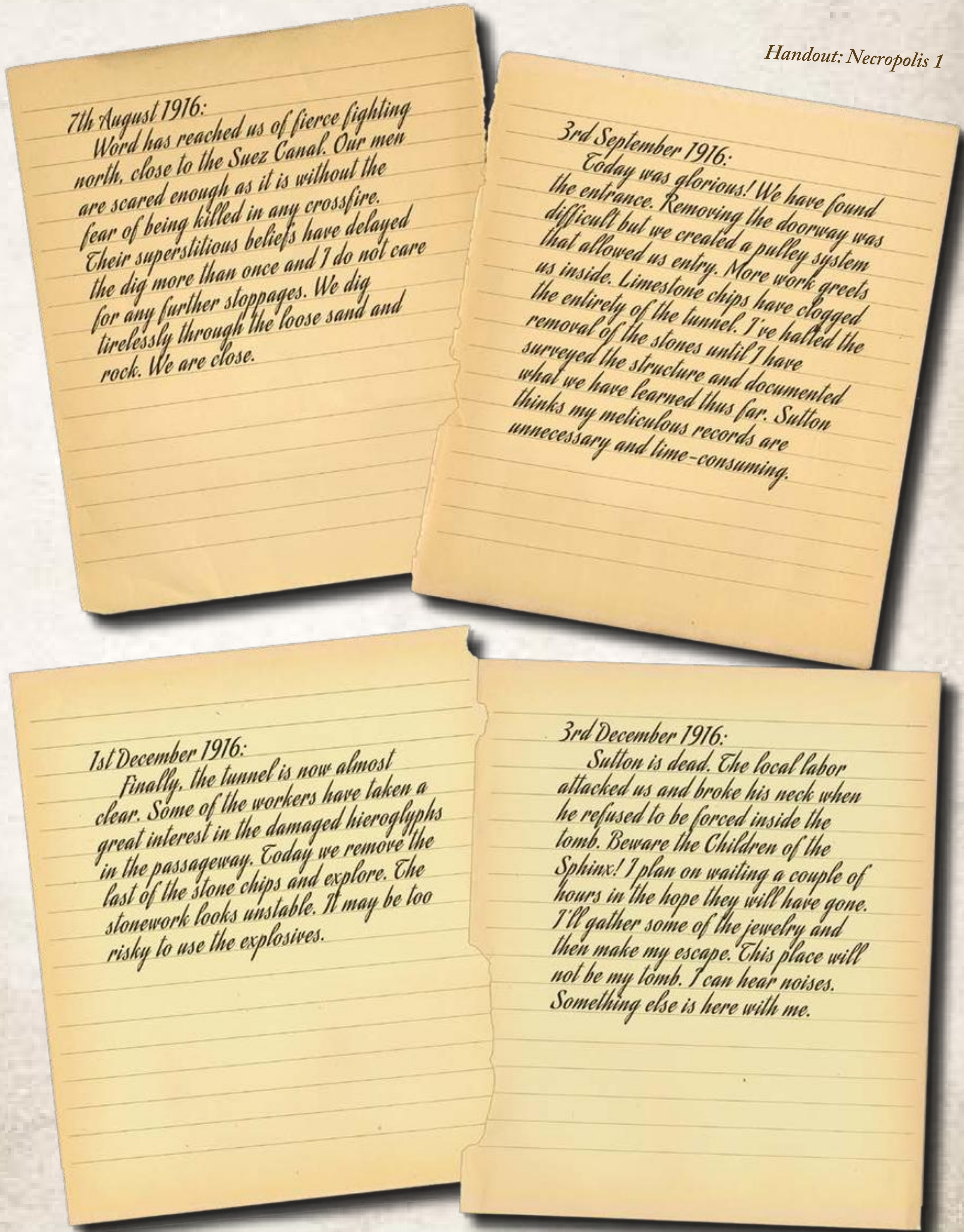
Possessions

.32 revolver loaded with 6 bullets, 4 spare bullets, fighting knife.

Player Notes:

COLLECTED PLAYER HANDOUTS

Handout: Necropolis 1



7th August 1916:

Word has reached us of fierce fighting north, close to the Suez Canal. Our men are scared enough as it is without the fear of being killed in any crossfire. Their superstitious beliefs have delayed the dig more than once and I do not care for any further stoppages. We dig tirelessly through the loose sand and rock. We are close.

3rd September 1916:

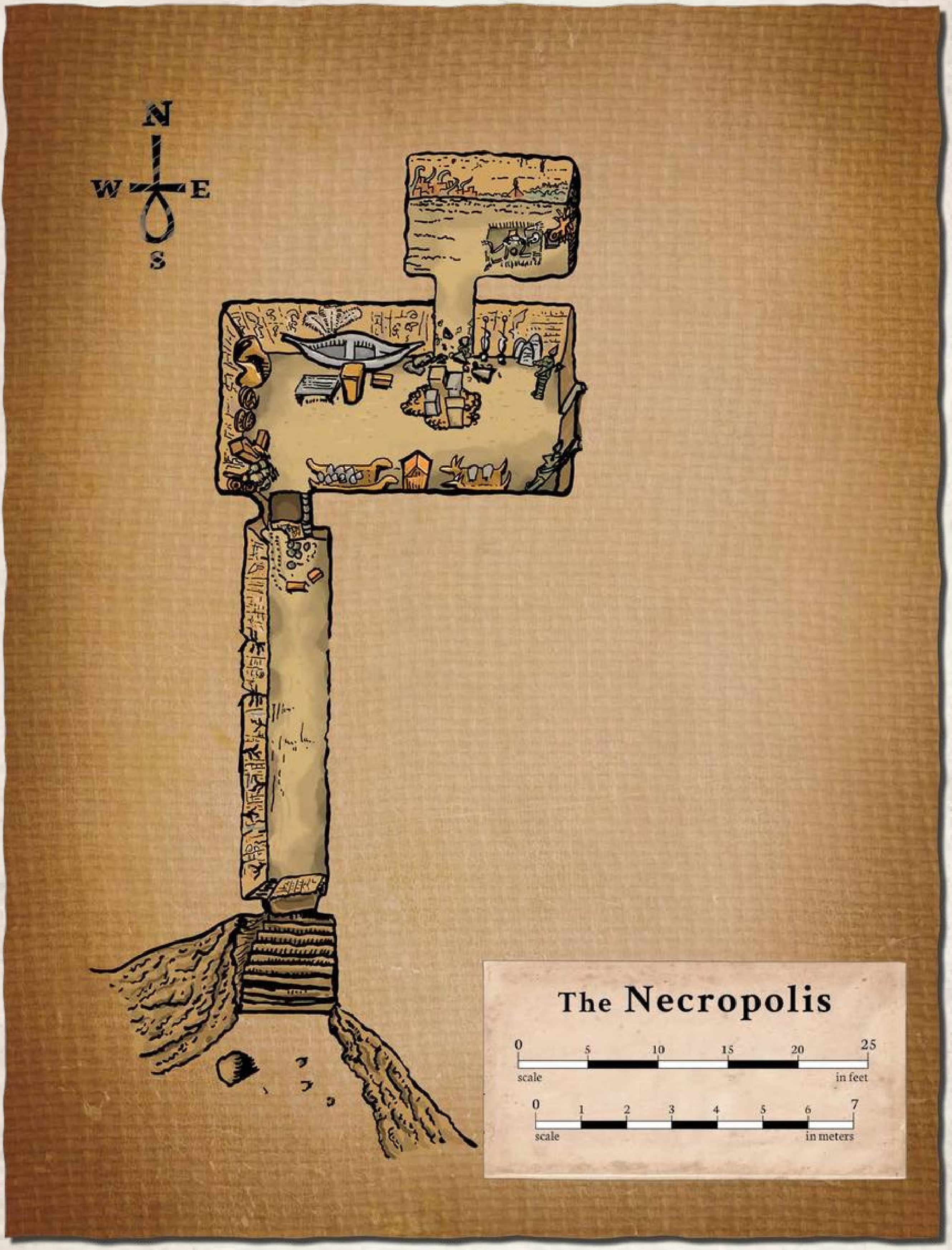
Today was glorious! We have found the entrance. Removing the doorway was difficult but we created a pulley system that allowed us entry. More work greets us inside. Limestone chips have clogged the entirety of the tunnel. I've halted the removal of the stones until I have surveyed the structure and documented what we have learned thus far. Sutton thinks my meticulous records are unnecessary and time-consuming.

1st December 1916:

Finally, the tunnel is now almost clear. Some of the workers have taken a great interest in the damaged hieroglyphs in the passageway. Today we remove the last of the stone chips and explore. The stonework looks unstable. It may be too risky to use the explosives.

3rd December 1916:

Sutton is dead. The local labor attacked us and broke his neck when he refused to be forced inside the tomb. Beware the Children of the Sphinx! I plan on waiting a couple of hours in the hope they will have gone. I'll gather some of the jewelry and then make my escape. This place will not be my tomb. I can hear noises. Something else is here with me.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The Necropolis
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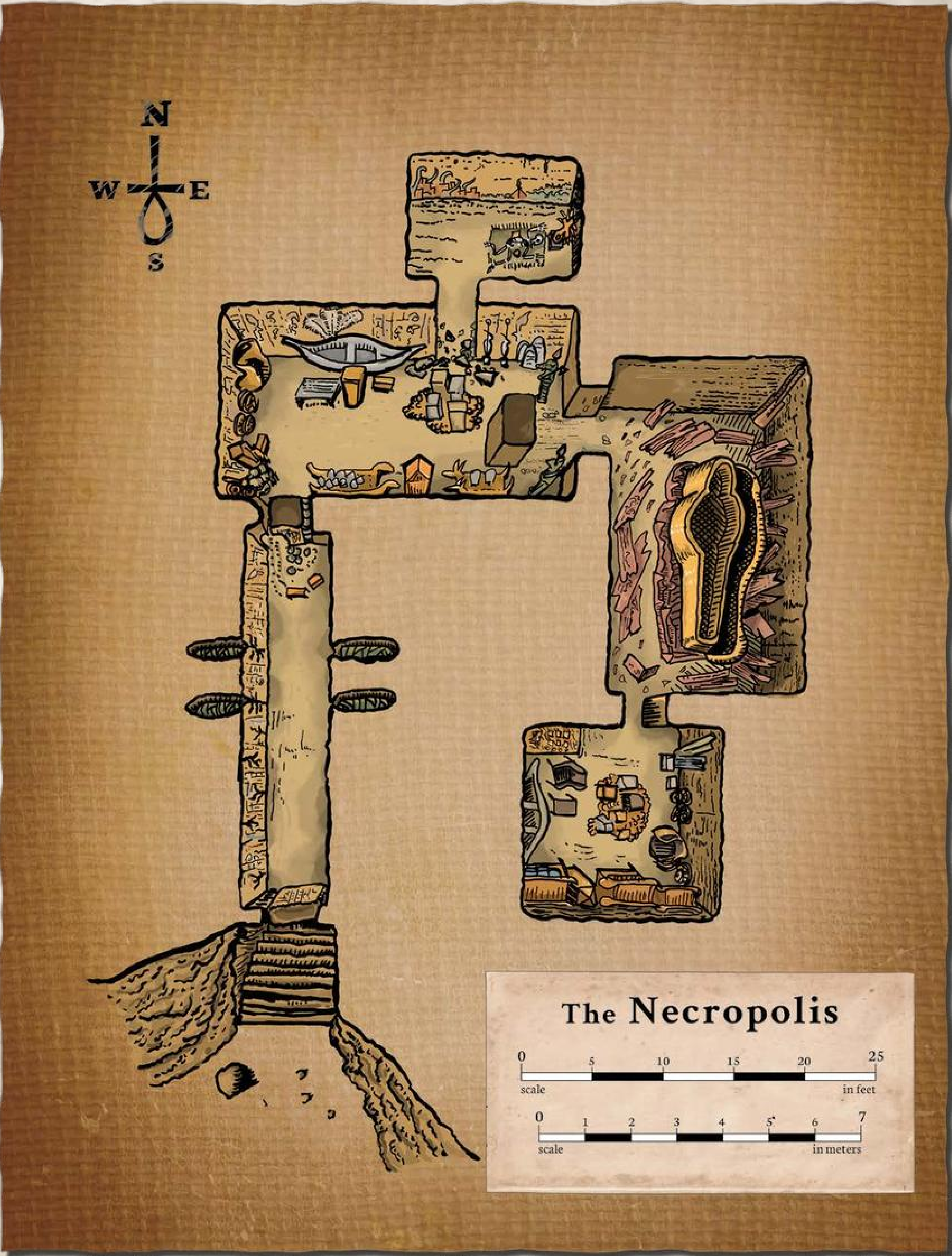
in meters

Player map for the Necropolis—1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The Necropolis
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in feet
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scale
in meters

Player map for the Necropolis—2

WHAT'S IN THE CELLAR?

What secrets lie in store in a mysterious cellar?

This scenario begins on Saturday, March 2nd, 1929 in a legal office in New York City, before relocating, like all good horror stories, to a cabin in the woods.

INTRODUCTION

In *What's in the Cellar?*, the investigators are tasked with finding evidence to prove the innocence of a wealthy New York attorney accused of murdering his wife—even though no trace of her body has, so far, been found. As might be expected in a *Call of Cthulhu* scenario, things are far from what they seem, and the investigators must uncover the secrets of the past and face a malevolent trapped entity if they are to save their client (and friend) from the electric chair.

SCENARIO STRUCTURE

If you intend to run this scenario as a one-hour game, then its component sections generally follow the timings shown below. If, on the other hand, you wish to run it as a longer game (either if you have more time available or if you have five or six investigators), then each section after **Ready to Play** will take around double the time listed here, if not longer. Remember, though, that these are only rough guidelines and can be adjusted as needed—or ignored entirely, if that makes sense for you and your players.

- **Set Up**: the Keeper talks briefly about the set up for this session as well as the pre-generated investigators that come with the scenario (or the most suitable types of investigator if players wish to create or adjust their own); if there are new players, a brief overview of the rules may also be necessary. The Keeper reads aloud the relevant text from the **Setting Up** section (page 38). Players select their investigators (if using the pre-generated characters), then introduce them to the other players.
- **Ready to Play:** (10 minutes in.) The Keeper confirms everyone is ready to begin and reads aloud the relevant section of **Start: The Blackwood Cabin** (page 41), answering any questions the players may have. The scenario really starts with the investigators descending into Blackwood's cellar.
- **Clues One to Four:** (15 minutes in.) The investigators search the cellar, finding Clues One to Four, as well as various tools and weapons.
- **Clues Five and Six:** (30 minutes in.) The creature begins to manifest and harass the investigators as they discover Clues Five and Six.
- **Clue Seven and Conclusion:** (45 minutes in.) The creature attacks the investigators as they search for Clue Seven.
- **Epilogue:** (55 minutes in.) The Keeper closes with a short epilogue and answers any questions the players might have about the scenario. Congratulate or commiserate with the players, as required!

BACKGROUND

Arthur Blackwood, an influential New York attorney, has contacted his cousin in a desperate plea to find evidence that will clear his good name. Eight months ago, Arthur and his wife, Rose, were vacationing at their summer cabin, near Whitehall, Washington County, New York. The cabin, with its peaceful view of Castle Creek, a tributary of the Mettawee River, was built by Arthur's great-great-great-grandfather, Milton Blackwood, in 1717. But the relaxing month-long vacation Arthur and Rose were enjoying ended in terror and tragedy. In the early hours of July 19th, 1928, Arthur was found wandering the North Ash Trail by John and Helen Turner. Arthur was disorientated, and his arms and chest were covered in blood. Rose could not be found,

Opposite: Discoveries in the cellar

and Arthur was arrested for the presumed murder of his wife. The murder trial begins on March 18th, 1929.

The New York State Police and the local Washington County Sheriff's Department have completed their investigation of the Blackwood cabin. All pertinent evidence was collected, photographed, and cataloged, and will be presented by the prosecution at Arthur's upcoming trial. Arthur's defense attorney (and business partner), Joseph Klein, is doing his best to keep Arthur out of the electric chair but with a lack of evidence to the contrary, Klein fears that Arthur will spend the rest of his days behind bars.

Arthur's mental faculties have returned, somewhat, and he's begun babbling about how Rose was taken by "darkness." Society at large believes Arthur Blackwood to be a cold-blooded killer who should fry for his crime. It is down to the investigators to discover whether Arthur is innocent or guilty.

THE TRUTH

Milton Blackwood, Arthur's ancestor, was a warlock who made a pact with a creature that endowed the Blackwood family line with uncanny luck, which manifested as wealth and good fortune. The creature demanded payment in blood and bone for its gift and Milton was happy to pay it. Over time, Milton kept tapping his "genie" for greater power and prosperity, until he devised a spell that would trap the creature in the cellar of his family's vacation cabin for eternity, meaning his bloodline would continue to benefit from its gift of good fortune without a need for further sacrifices. The keystone to Milton's spell was a ring that must be worn by someone of Blackwood blood. As long as such a person wears the ring, the creature remains sealed below the cellar floor of Milton Blackwood's summer home.

As the decades and centuries passed, the binding ring was handed down the Blackwood family line. The creature remained imprisoned beneath the cabin's cellar floor but, as time went on, the truth about the creature faded into myth and was, eventually, forgotten. The Blackwood ring was worn out of tradition, its true purpose all but lost to living memory. Of course, no one in the Blackwood family ever questioned the uncanny good luck that the line enjoyed.

On July 18th, 1928, Arthur Blackwood, the current possessor of the family ring, removed it to avoid getting a blister as he chopped wood for a campfire. With the ring in Arthur's pocket, Rose went to the cellar to get some vegetables—and then the screaming began. Rose had unwittingly entered the creature's prison and was attacked for her (and Arthur's) mistake. On hearing her screams, Arthur raced to the cellar to witness his wife being torn to pieces before his very eyes. In the commotion, the ring popped out of Arthur's pocket and tumbled onto the cellar floor. The creature then buried the ring deep beneath the crushed white surface of its enforced abode to prevent anyone in the Blackwood bloodline from ever finding and using it again.

The creature, having spent long years trapped by the Blackwoods, is now a rage-filled horror intent on revenge and the destruction of the family line. In its malice, it chooses to attack only those in the company of a Blackwood family member. The creature wishes to save any Blackwoods present for the final kill, before, one day soon, breaking free of its confines and hunting them all to their deaths. If an investigator of the Blackwood bloodline can find and wear the ring, the creature will be forced back into its prison and further family tragedy averted.

ABOUT THE INVESTIGATORS

Four pre-generated investigators are supplied for use with *What's in the Cellar?*. Each has a reason to be involved in the Blackwood case, either in a personal or a professional capacity, as described on their character backgrounds.

If the players choose to run through the scenario with the pre-generated investigators, give them the opportunity to read over them before play begins so they can make best use of the information provided (skills, roleplaying hooks, and so on). Each investigator is gender neutral, allowing the players to decide whether they wish to play a male, female, or non-binary character. Below is a brief description of each of the pre-generated investigators.

The Author, *age 33, relative of Arthur Blackwood*

As a family member, the Author (who specializes in books on the occult and unexplained mysteries) has been summoned by their frantic cousin-several-times-removed to help clear his name.

- **Traits**: curious by nature; intrigued by the mystery of the murder of Rose Blackwood.
- **Roleplaying hook**: not only do they wish to exonerate Arthur, but could there also be a book in it?

The Private Detective, *age 41*

Hired by Joseph Klein, Arthur Blackwood's business partner as well as his defense attorney, the Private Detective has the authority of the court to collect evidence for the defense team.

- **Traits:** meticulous and professional.
- **Roleplaying hook**: if they can find enough evidence to prove Arthur's innocence then great. If not, they just want it to be known that they did a good and thorough job.

The Psychologist, *age 55*

Like the Private Detective, the Psychologist has been hired by Arthur Blackwood's law partner and defense attorney, Joseph Klein, to help build his case by determining Arthur's mental state at the time he allegedly murdered his wife.

- **Traits**: questioning and broad-minded.
- **Roleplaying hook**: need to determine whether or not Arthur Blackwood is delusional. The Psychologist just can't shake the feeling that the Blackwood name is somehow important to them beyond their professional curiosity.

The Architect, *age 34, friend of the Blackwood family*

A close friend of the Blackwoods, the Architect is happy to offer their services to Arthur and his legal team in an attempt to help prove his innocence.

- **Traits:** friendly and helpful, but distinctly bemused by their current situation.
- **Roleplaying hook**: horrified by the plight their friend and determined to assist however they can.

Fewer Than Four Players

If your group doesn't have four players but they still want to use the pre-generated investigators, then we recommend the following: in a one-player game, the Author should be chosen (as they are a relative and, therefore, part of the Blackwood bloodline so loathed by the monster). In a two-player game, add in the Private Detective. With three players, use the Psychologist as well. The Architect should only be used if you have four or more players.

Additional/Alternate Investigators

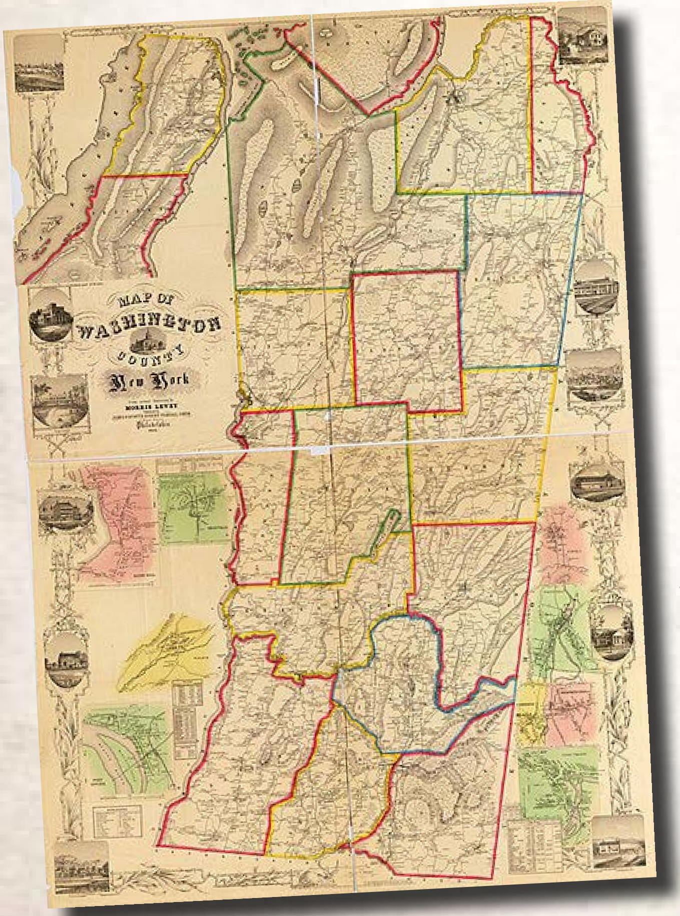
If you have more than four players and need to create some additional pre-generated player characters, then perhaps one might be a junior member of Blackwood and Klein's legal firm, sent along to keep an eye on the investigators. After all, only the Private Detective and the Psychologist have been directly employed by the company to help with the case—

Pictureesque Washington county

the Author and the Architect are hardly professionals in this sort of matter! Another potential investigator is a member of the local police force, tasked with keeping an eye on the Blackwood cabin and making sure that gawkers and souvenir hunters don't disturb the scene before the defense team have a chance to search it for further clues.

If the players wish to create their own investigators, or bring along existing ones, then they need to have a reason to be involved in the case—they may even wish to look at the pre-generated characters for inspiration in order to develop suitable links to the Blackwood defense. Alternatively, could they actually be there at the behest of the prosecution team, who are determined to make sure that Arthur Blackwood can't play the insanity card in his upcoming trial? Don't forget that, in order to make full use of the creature and its vendetta, at least one of the investigators should also be related to the Blackwoods, whether they realize it or not (as is the case with the Psychologist). Could they be from a rival branch of the family, determined to seize Arthur's fortune for themselves by finding evidence to send him to the electric chair?

Useful skills for newly-created or existing investigators in this scenario include: First Aid, Language (English), Library Use, Medicine, Occult, Science (Biology), and Spot Hidden.



Washington county road map

SETTING UP

Read aloud or paraphrase the information in **Handout: Cellar 1** (page 39) and then give this handout to the players. Once the players have had a chance to read it for themselves, read aloud or paraphrase the following, adjusting it, if necessary, to fit the investigators in play:

Today is Saturday, March 2nd, 1929, eight months after Arthur Blackwood was arrested for the murder of his wife. As you enter the law office of Joseph Klein, you look upon a breathtaking view of the New York skyline. Klein bids you welcome and gestures for you to take a seat.

Sitting on Klein's desk is a large box with a pair of strange wheels and a row of buttons on its face. "Thank you for coming," *Klein says, as he shakes your hands.* "As you are aware, Arthur Blackwood is facing the electric chair. I'm trying to negotiate a lifetime prison sentence, but the outlook is bleak."

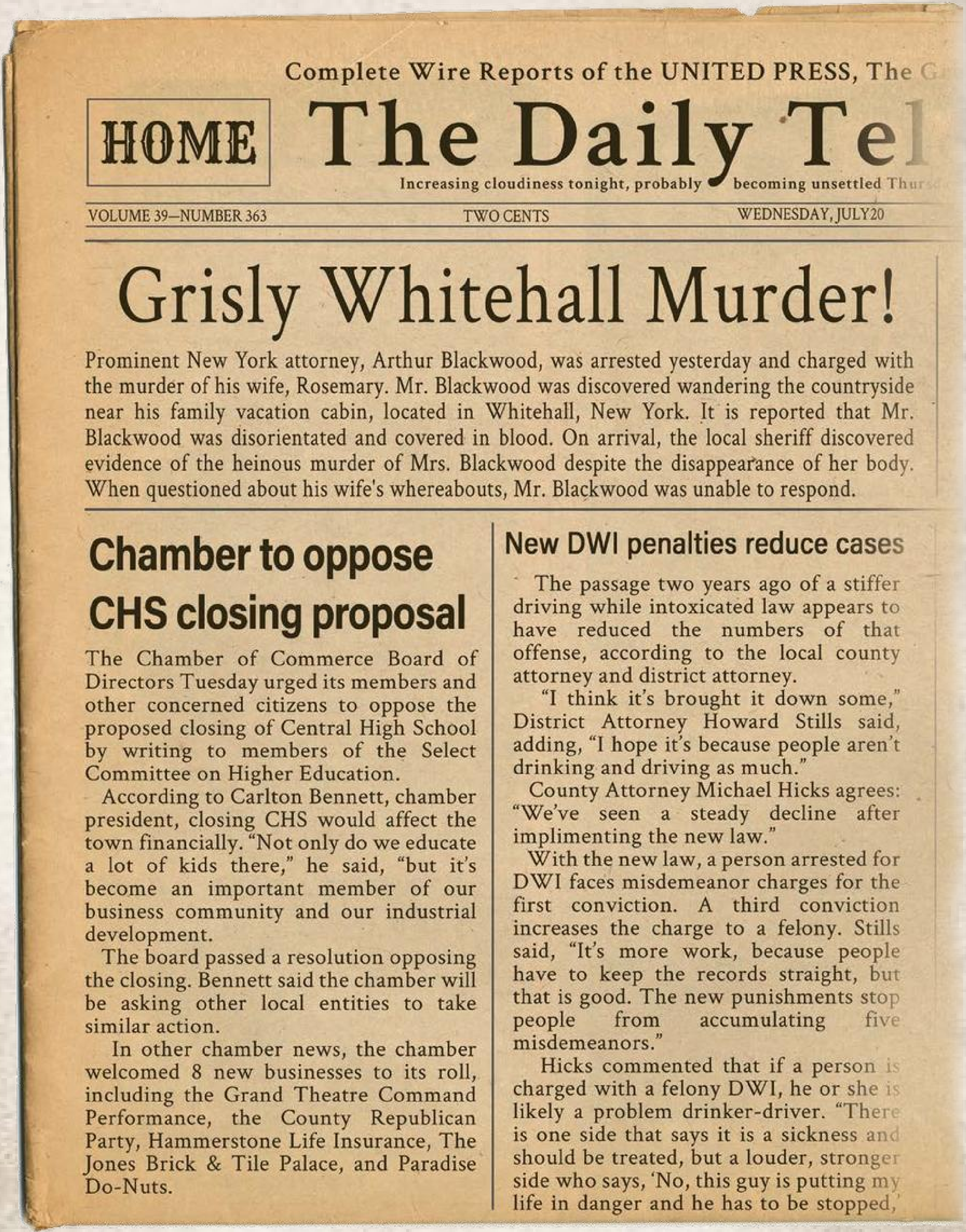
Klein places a hand on the strange box on his desk. "This is a magnetic voice recorder. I use it to record conversations with defendants, so you can hear their exact statement in their own words. These are brand new and the company that makes them is a client of ours, so we got access to this prototype." *Klein presses a button and says,* "Arthur has a message for you."

As the wheels begin to spin, you hear Arthur's scratchy voice emanate from the box: "Cousin, please… you must help me. I can't explain it… I never believed the stories for they were too fantastic to be real, but the Blackwood family line is both blessed and cursed! A genie lives in the cellar of the family cabin but to control it you must find my ring. I dropped it, I think, in the cellar! Please find my ring and prove to the police that the genie exists! Please, I implore you! Find my ring, for it is the only thing that can prove my innocence!"

Klein opens a manila folder and shows you a photograph of the cellar beneath the Blackwood cabin. It shows dark earthen walls, lined with shelves, and a white floor of crushed shells and gravel. A large amount of blood is splashed and splattered across the floor. "As you can see, there is no such thing as a genie," *Klein says.* "Poor Arthur has been under incredible stress over the last few years; he eventually snapped and butchered his wife."

Klein then gives you a key to the cabin and a letter granting you access to the property—should the local authorities want to know why you are there. "It's only because I still love and respect Arthur that I am even entertaining his request to have you search the cellar for anything to clear his name. Good luck."

Handout: Cellar 1



Complete Wire Reports of the UNITED PRESS, The G

HOME

The Daily Tel

Increasing cloudiness tonight, probably becoming unsettled Thur

VOLUME 39—NUMBER 363 TWO CENTS WEDNESDAY, JULY20

Grisly Whitehall Murder!

Prominent New York attorney, Arthur Blackwood, was arrested yesterday and charged with the murder of his wife, Rosemary. Mr. Blackwood was discovered wandering the countryside near his family vacation cabin, located in Whitehall, New York. It is reported that Mr. Blackwood was disorientated and covered in blood. On arrival, the local sheriff discovered evidence of the heinous murder of Mrs. Blackwood despite the disappearance of her body. When questioned about his wife's whereabouts, Mr. Blackwood was unable to respond.

Chamber to oppose CHS closing proposal

The Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors Tuesday urged its members and other concerned citizens to oppose the proposed closing of Central High School by writing to members of the Select Committee on Higher Education.

According to Carlton Bennett, chamber president, closing CHS would affect the town financially. "Not only do we educate a lot of kids there," he said, "but it's become an important member of our business community and our industrial development.

The board passed a resolution opposing the closing. Bennett said the chamber will be asking other local entities to take similar action.

In other chamber news, the chamber welcomed 8 new businesses to its roll, including the Grand Theatre Command Performance, the County Republican Party, Hammerstone Life Insurance, The Jones Brick & Tile Palace, and Paradise Do-Nuts.

New DWI penalties reduce cases

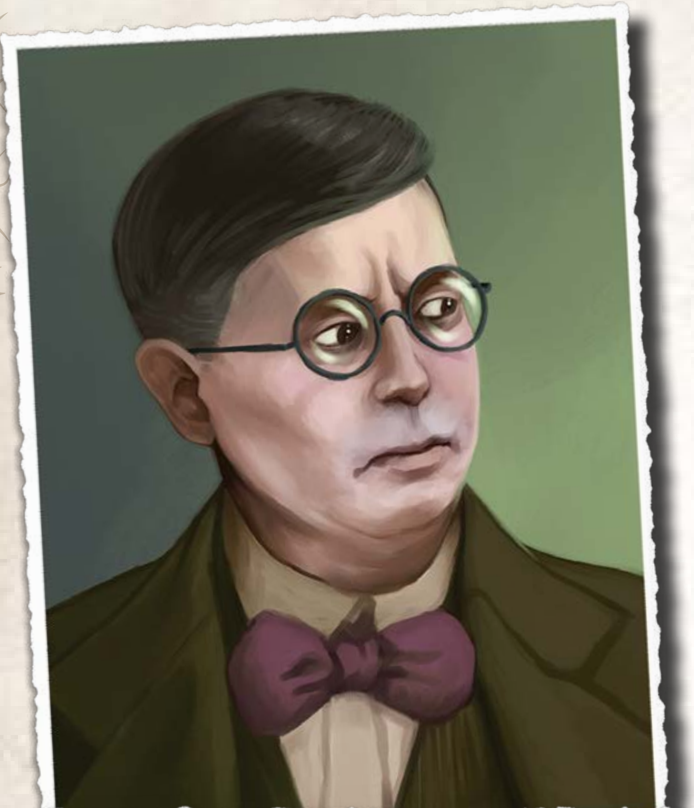
The passage two years ago of a stiffer driving while intoxicated law appears to have reduced the numbers of that offense, according to the local county attorney and district attorney.

"I think it's brought it down some," District Attorney Howard Stills said, adding, "I hope it's because people aren't drinking and driving as much."

County Attorney Michael Hicks agrees: "We've seen a steady decline after implimenting the new law."

With the new law, a person arrested for DWI faces misdemeanor charges for the first conviction. A third conviction increases the charge to a felony. Stills said, "It's more work, because people have to keep the records straight, but that is good. The new punishments stop people from accumulating five misdemeanors."

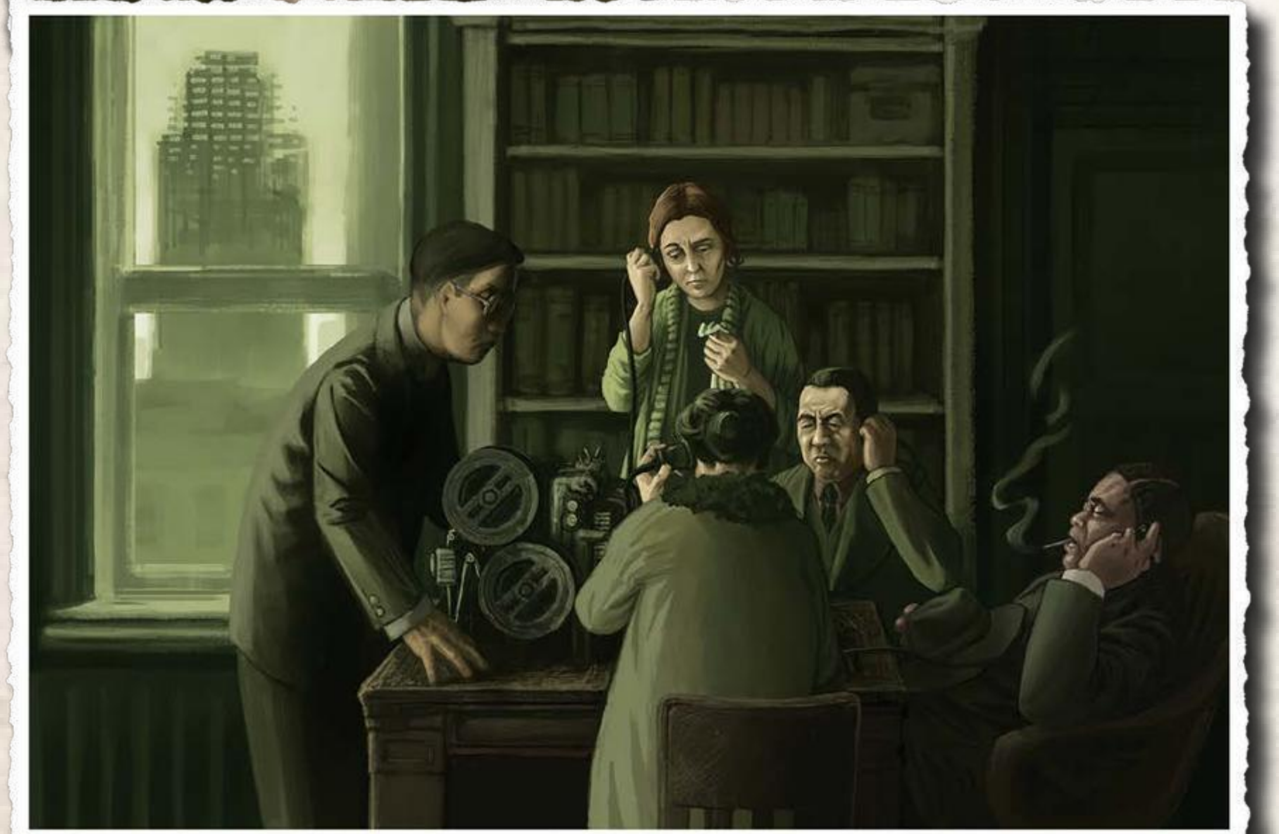
Hicks commented that if a person is charged with a felony DWI, he or she is likely a problem drinker-driver. "There is one side that says it is a sickness and should be treated, but a louder, stronger side who says, 'No, this guy is putting my life in danger and he has to be stopped,'



Mr. Klein then asks the investigators to introduce themselves to one another. Ask the players to give their characters' names, then briefly describe them and their various roles. If using the pre-generated characters, then Klein can add the following points as necessary: the Author is a cousin of Arthur Blackwood—Arthur asked for their involvement; the Private Detective is recognized by the court as having the authority to collect evidence so that it may be used in Arthur's defense; the Psychologist is to be a witness and provide expert testimony; while the Architect is a friend of the Blackwood family and Arthur asked for their help as well. If the players are using their own investigators, then Klein is able to provide a suitable potted summary for each of them, too.

Keeper note: the Psychologist is not aware they are a distant relative of the Blackwoods.

If this is the first experience of *Call of Cthulhu* for some or all of the players, then they may also need a brief overview of the rules before play begins in earnest (**Introducing the Rules**, page 6).



Above: Joseph Klein
Right: Listening to the magnetic recording

START: THE BLACKWOOD CABIN

The Blackwood cabin is a small one-story house, with two bedrooms, a small kitchen, and a large parlor. There is a trapdoor in the parlor that leads to the cellar under the cabin. Everything in the cabin is neat, clean, and orderly. It is assumed that the investigators have already browsed through the main part of the cabin and found nothing unusual. Play begins with the investigators entering the dark and claustrophobic cellar. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

Having set out from Klein's office, you have already looked around the main rooms of Blackwood's cabin and found nothing of interest or relevance to the case. You are now looking through the trapdoor into the cellar, where the police say Rose's murder took place.

THE CELLAR

Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

While looking into the cellar from the open trap door in the parlor, your view is extremely limited. Light from the parlor spills through the hatch illuminating a ladder, some shelving, and the white shell and gravel floor. You can make out that the shelves hold jars, small boxes, and other knick-knacks. Everything is covered in a thick layer of dust. You also note that the cellar has no lighting, so you will need to use your own lanterns and flashlights. Large cobwebs hang everywhere.

The floor of the cellar is white, as it's comprised of a layer of crushed seashells and pea gravel. Hidden beneath this visible top surface, out of sight of the investigators, is a separate layer of crushed bone. Combined, the two have a depth of 2 feet (60 cm). When walked upon, the cellar floor makes a quiet crunching sound but somehow has a disturbingly spongy feel to it.

Keeper note: if questioned about the logic of having such a floor in a cellar, explain that the gravel and seashells help

The Blackwood cabin

to drain moisture. Naturally, the investigators don't know about the layer of bones—yet (see **Clue Five: Digging up the Floor**, page 47).

As soon as the investigators enter the cellar, provide them with the **Player's Cellar Map** (page 57). Refer to the **Keeper's Cellar Map** (page 43) as this notes where certain clues can be found, as well as other antiques and tools that may be of use.

Keeper note: the following clues are described in the order they are most likely to be found; however, feel free to alter this flow dependent on the investigators' actions.

CLUE ONE: FLOOR TOO CLEAN

As the investigators go down the ladder, they recognize the cellar from the photograph shown to them by Klein as the room in which the murder allegedly took place. Now, however, the floor is clean and white, with no apparent signs of blood at all.

The ceiling is low down here, being only 7 feet (2 m) high. The cellar is a large and "L" shaped area. The walls are lined with shelves storing canned and jarred food, while small piles of junk are stored on the floor and against the walls. A ladder is bolted to the wall to allow access to and from the parlor. There are no other exits from the cellar.

Investigators succeeding with a **Spot Hidden** roll notice trace amounts of blood spatter on some of the jars and cans on the nearby shelves. The small amount of blood appears consistent with the account of the murder and the photographs—if they recall, the vast majority of blood was spilled on the floor. What's strange, though, is that there is no longer any trace of blood on the floor at all.

Keeper note: the creature has absorbed all of the blood.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BLOOD

There is one critical element to this scenario: as already mentioned, at least one of the investigators must be a blood relative of Arthur Blackwood's. Of the four pre-generated investigators, the Author is Arthur Blackwood's cousin; thus, Blackwood blood flows through their veins. And, unbeknownst to everyone, including themselves, the Psychologist is also a very distant cousin (with just enough Blackwood blood for the creature to recognize them for what they are).

The horror at the Blackwood cabin is directly tied to the Blackwood family line, which is why the police were not attacked when they entered the cellar. The unfortunate investigator(s) possessing the blood of the Blackwoods is the catalyst that triggers the climactic battle at the end of this scenario. When the investigators arrive, the creature senses that one (or more) of the Blackwoods is in the cabin and it begins to attack the other investigators, saving the Blackwood blood relative for last (see **The Creature of Darkness Stirs**, page 45, for further details).

CLUE TWO: LADDER AND FLOOR

If an investigator inspects the ladder, they notice it extends down into the crushed shell and gravel floor, instead of resting on the top of it. The clue suggests that it may be worth digging into the floor as this is obviously not the original ground level. If necessary, a successful **INT** roll can discover this clue.

Depending on when and where they choose to dig, the investigators may unwittingly stumble upon the Blackwood binding ring before uncovering many of the other clues, triggering the creature to attack (if it has not already done so; see **Clue Seven: The Binding Ring**, page 47, for further details).

Searching the Cellar

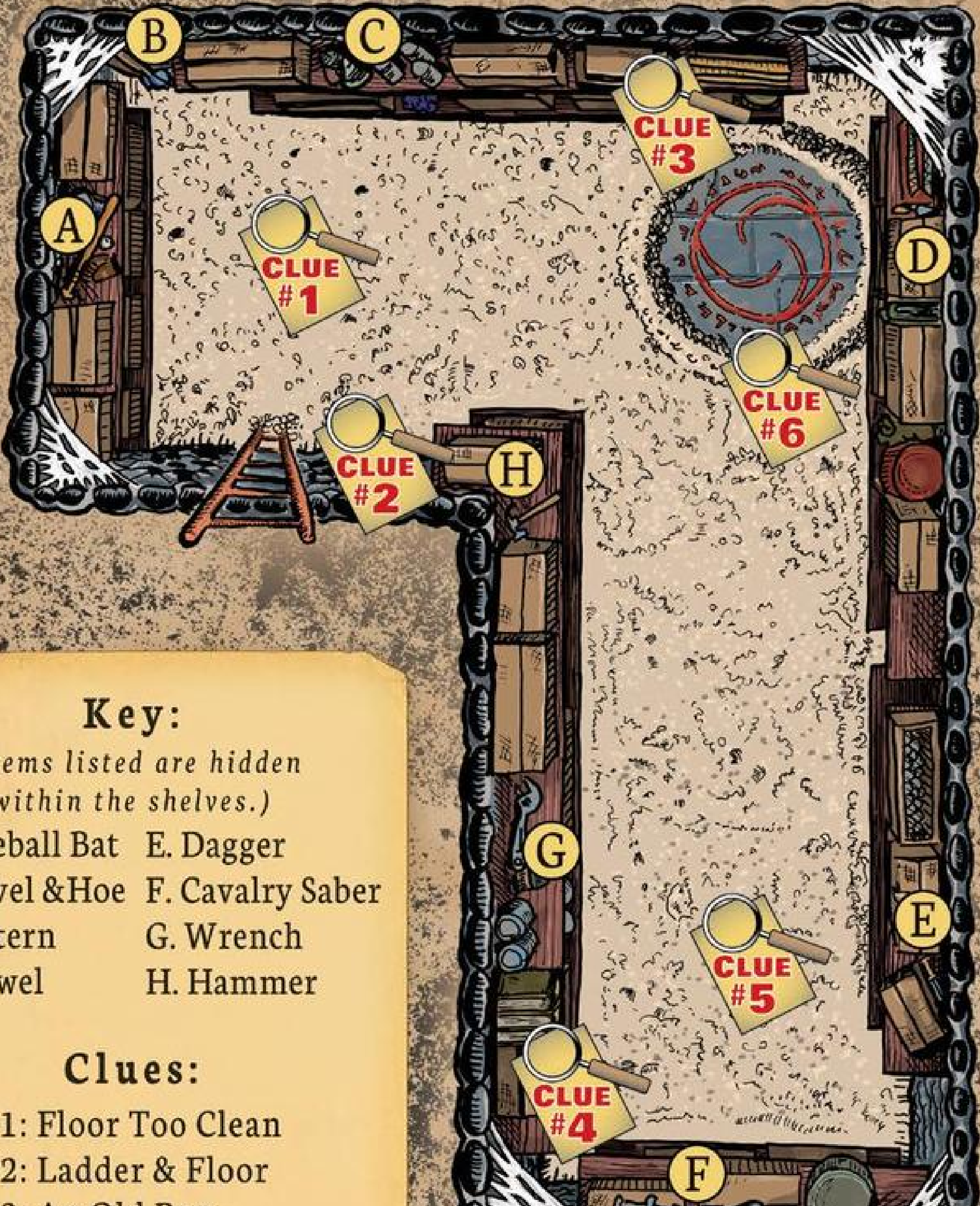
The shelves lining the cellar walls are congested with useless junk, which, nevertheless, hides useful clues, tools, and weapons. Investigators searching the cellar require a successful **Spot Hidden** roll to find the various items; certain objects are harder to find and thus require a Hard or Extreme success to locate (see following).

The Keeper should pick one of the following items for each successful roll made by the group, depending on its level of success—note that, if the item can be used as a weapon, its damage is given in parentheses. Allow the players to make more than one **Spot Hidden** roll if they say they are searching different locations in the cellar (or at a later stage in the scenario). Pushed rolls are also permitted if the players describe what they are doing to facilitate their search (carefully moving one item at a time, finding a better light source, and so on), but failure risks dropping or breaking fragile items, or causing a minor injury in the case of potential weapons (1 point of damage for cuts, bruises, or broken toes, for example).

Opposite: The Cellar map

The Cellar

A Plan of the Blackwood's Cabin Cellar


B
C
CLUE #3
A
CLUE #1
D
CLUE #6
CLUE #2
H
G
E
CLUE #5
CLUE #4
F

Key:

(Items listed are hidden within the shelves.)

A. Baseball Bat
B. Shovel &Hoe
C. Lantern
D. Trowel
E. Dagger
F. Cavalry Saber
G. Wrench
H. Hammer

Clues:

Clue #1: Floor Too Clean
Clue #2: Ladder & Floor
Clue #3: An Old Box
Clue #4: A Scrapbook
Clue #5: Digging up the Floor
Clue #6: The Arcane Symbol

Spot Hidden roll (Regular success):

- An old wooden box, approximately 18 inches by 12 inches by 8 inches (46 cm by 30 cm by 20 cm) (see **Clue Three: An Old Box**, page 44)
- Collection of books (see **Clue Four: A Scrapbook**, page 47)
- Three pairs of old leather gloves (see **Clue Five: Digging up the Floor**, page 47)
- Shovel (1D6+DB damage)
- Hoe (1D4+DB damage)
- Baseball bat (1D6+DB damage)
- Hammer (1D4+DB damage)

Spot Hidden roll (Hard success):

- Heavy wrench (1D6+DB damage)
- Dagger (1D4+2+DB damage)
- Trowel with very sharp edges (1D4+2+DB damage)

Spot Hidden roll (Extreme success):

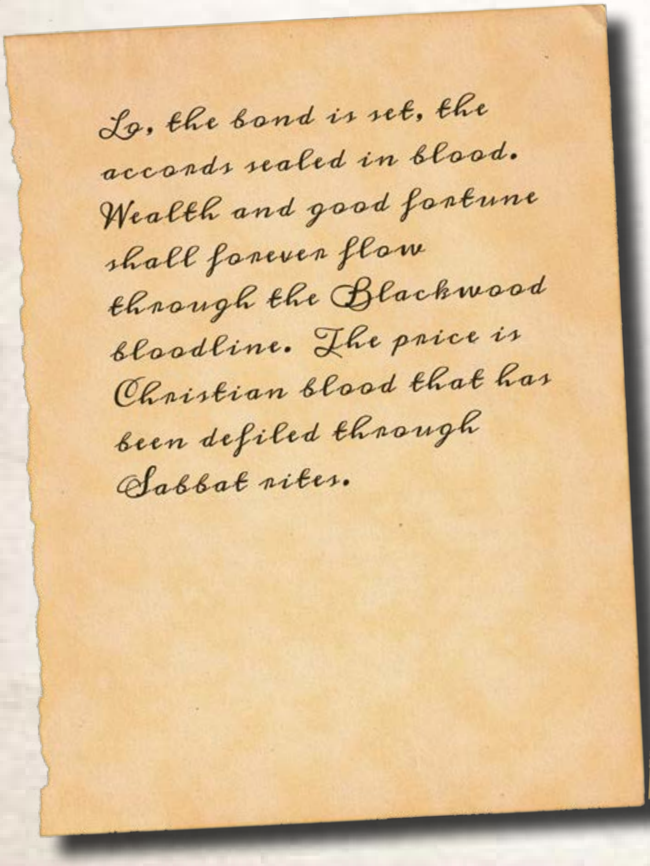
- Cavalry saber (1D8+DB damage)

CLUE THREE: AN OLD BOX

As mentioned in the previous section, with a successful **Spot Hidden** roll one of the investigators finds a moldy old box, containing old photographs, drawings, and journals. Looking through these items reveals the following information.

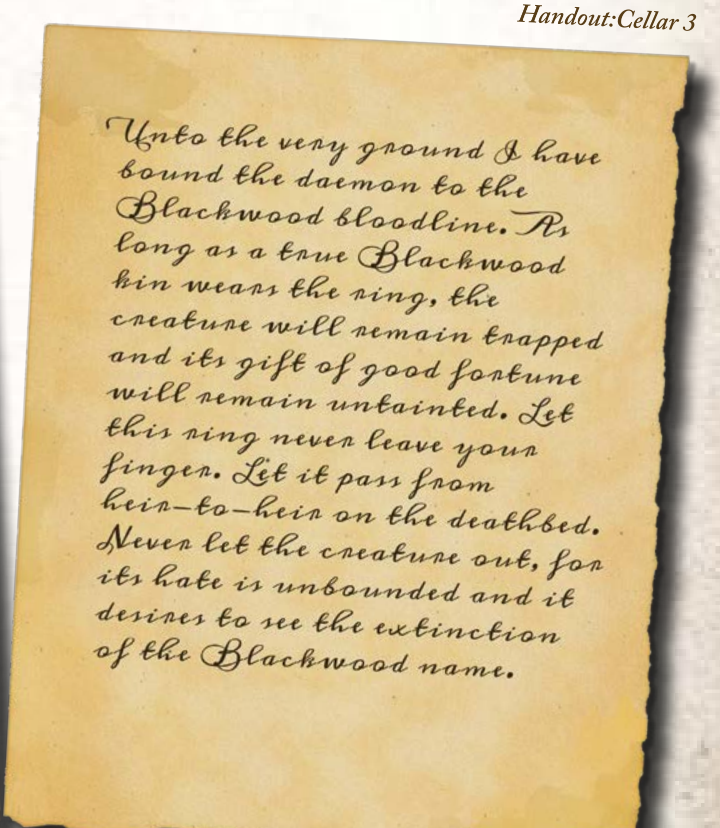
- **A small painting:** depicting a stern-looking man in Puritan clothing—an ostentatious black-jeweled ring on one of his fingers immediately catches the eye. On the back of the painting is written "Wizard Milton Blackwood." **Keeper note:** Milton's magical binding ring, the Blackwood heirloom, is featured in the painting. The portrait's eyes seem, unnervingly, to watch the viewer, as if the man in the painting were looking into the viewer's soul. Call for a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2 loss).
- **A hand-written journal:** dated 1725; a successful **Language (English)** roll is required to read its archaic script. A cursory look reveals it is the journal of Milton Blackwood; the reader soon finds a section describing a pact the warlock made with a creature "not of this Earth." Give **Handout: Cellar 2** to the player reading the journal.
- **A scrap of paper:** discovered at the bottom of the box; a successful **Language (English)** roll is required to read the archaic script. Give **Handout: Cellar 3** to the player reading the piece of paper.

Handout:Cellar 2



Lo, the bond is set, the accords sealed in blood. Wealth and good fortune shall forever flow through the Blackwood bloodline. The price is Christian blood that has been defiled through Sabbat rites.

Handout:Cellar 3



Unto the very ground I have bound the daemon to the Blackwood bloodline. As long as a true Blackwood kin wears the ring, the creature will remain trapped and its gift of good fortune will remain untainted. Let this ring never leave your finger. Let it pass from heir-to-heir on the deathbed. Never let the creature out, for its hate is unbounded and it desires to see the extinction of the Blackwood name.

THE CREATURE OF DARKNESS STIRS

Once the investigators have taken an initial look around the cellar and perhaps found Clues One to Three, the creature, sensing the proximity of Blackwood blood, begins to manifest and act. Use the following to guide the creature's actions, which should harry and bother the investigators as they go on to find Clues Four through Seven.

For 200 years, the nameless creature has been bound by a sigil inscribed on the cellar floor (below the gravel, shell, and bone), and the ring carried by the Blackwood bloodline. The creature's hatred for the Blackwoods has made it spiteful and cunning. The creature attempts to attack the investigators as they wander off alone into different areas of the cellar. It has limited telekinetic abilities and is able to make noises or knock things over in order to distract and attract attention, in the hope of separating an investigator from their companions.

As the investigators gather more clues, the creature's fury grows until it fully materializes, focusing its attacks on one individual—this could be the investigator with the lowest Luck score or someone the creature has already interacted with during the course of the scenario. The likely situation is that one or more of the investigators

DIRECTING THE PLAYERS

If the players arrive at a point where they are at a complete loss about how to proceed, either in the early stages of the monster's harassment or while under full attack, as an option the Keeper may have the creature goad the investigators and, in so doing, give them a clue. The creature might taunt the investigators as it attacks, saying, "*I will be free! The ring shall bind me no more!*" If an investigator is clearly searching for the ring, it could scream, "*Your digging shall not avail you!*"

If you want to strongly hint at the Psychologist's secret family connection to the Blackwood bloodline (assuming they are in play), the creature could appear nearby and whisper, "*Your blood is cursed! All Blackwoods must die!*"

Hopefully, such clues draw the players' attention to the gravel floor and the fact the ring is buried beneath it, as well as clarifying the Psychologist's ties to Arthur Blackwood.

Inside the cellar

become embroiled in the combat, leaving the other investigator(s) to frantically search for the ring in the gravel (see **Clue Seven: The Binding Ring**, page 47) and, perhaps, win the day. See the **Directing the Players** box, nearby, for advice on how to prompt the players if they are struggling to know what to do.

The creature's hate manifests as an extreme drop in temperature; the angrier the creature gets, the colder the ambient temperature becomes. Just prior to the creature's physical manifestation, the air also begins to smell of rotting eggs and decaying flesh.

The creature has been waiting for someone with Blackwood blood to return to the cabin, as each kill strengthens it. If it kills two more humans (i.e. two of the investigators), it will be strong enough to leave the cabin and begin exploring this dimension—which can only mean bad news for any humans it then comes upon, especially if they happen to be Blackwoods. If the investigators do not destroy the creature or re-bind it to the cellar by finding **Clue Seven: The Binding Ring** (page 47), it potentially spells doom for many innocent people. Refer to the creature's profile in **The Monster** section on page 49 for further details.

INSANE INVESTIGATORS

Remember, if an investigator loses 5 or more points of Sanity in one go or accrues a loss of one-fifth or more of their starting Sanity over the course of the scenario, then there is a real possibility that they could go insane (either temporarily or indefinitely). As a reminder, each of the pre-generated investigators' starting Sanity points and the amount they must lose to go indefinitely insane are provided below. Should insanity occur, a possible bout of madness is suggested (each lasting for 1D10 rounds), as well as an initial involuntary action.

Author

- **SAN:** 45
- **Indefinite insanity:** at 9+ points lost.
- **Involuntary action:** screams loudly.
- **Bout of madness:** scotophobia, a fear of darkness. The Author has hot and cold sweats and is filled with dread due to the limited light in the cellar. If any light sources go out or fall on the floor, the Author panics and all actions (except combat) suffer one penalty die. "*No—not the darkness! Anything but the darkness!*"

Private Detective

- **SAN:** 50
- **Indefinite insanity:** at 10+ points lost.
- **Involuntary action:** fires gun in random direction (if held) or drops flashlight to the ground.
- **Bout of madness:** attempts to trap everyone and everything in the cellar, believing that it will prevent bad things from escaping. Will do anything to keep the others from exiting up the ladder and through the trap door. "*Must… contain… the evil!*"

Psychologist

- **SAN:** 60
- **Indefinite insanity:** at 12+ points lost.
- **Involuntary action:** drops whatever is being held.
- **Bout of madness:** amnesia; the Psychologist suddenly forgets why they are here and what they are doing. "*Wait! Why am I here? Where even is here?*"

Architect

- **SAN:** 60
- **Indefinite insanity:** at 12+ points lost.
- **Involuntary action:** faints to the floor for 1 round.
- **Bout of madness:** paranoia. The Architect now believes that the Author (or another investigator) has set this whole thing up and betrayed them all. The Author is not to be trusted and probably needs to be stopped from whatever they are currently doing. "*No more of your lies! Why are you doing this, eh? Answer me, dammit!*"

CLUE FOUR: A SCRAPBOOK

Investigators browsing through the books on the shelves may attempt a **Library Use** roll: if successful, an old hand-bound scrapbook is found. Thumbing through the scrapbook, the investigator discovers a collection of newspaper articles with the following headlines:

- Fire Devastates Valley (1799)
- Influenza Count Rises (1837)
- Mettawee Flood Waters (1858)
- Washington County Drought (1881)
- Local Man Struck by Lightning (1901)

Investing time to read through the articles (no skill roll required), allows the investigator to realize that each one features a tragic incident involving a member of the Blackwood family who, against all odds, miraculously survived or endured the event. The Blackwood family seems to be blessed with uncanny good luck (if necessary, a successful **INT** roll can prompt this idea). The article headlined, "Local Man Struck by Lightning" features a young Arthur Blackwood and describes how he survived a direct lightning strike while digging up an old tree stump.

CLUE FIVE: DIGGING UP THE FLOOR

Investigators opting to dig into the floor find it to be an easy task that can be done with their bare hands or a tool (such as the shovel, trowel, or hoe). Digging up the floor with bare hands causes 1D2 points of damage—those taking the time to find some old gloves to wear avoid damaging their hands (see **Searching the Cellar**, page 42).

Moments after the investigator begins digging, they unearth the hidden layer of human bones. While most of the bones are crushed and unrecognizable, some may be identified as bits of human skeleton—call for a **First Aid**, **Medicine**, **Science (Biology)**, or Hard **Know** roll to determine their human origin. Discovering and recognizing the human remains calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss).

Further digging reveals a partial human skull, to which pieces of desiccated flesh still cling. A successful **Medicine** or **Science (Biology)** roll identifies it as a female cranium, as well as noting there are deep tooth marks scratched into its surface. The flesh clinging to it indicates death was approximately eight months ago (this is Rose Blackwood's skull). The roll also confirms that the woman died from a vicious "animal" attack—meaning it is highly unlikely that Arthur Blackwood is responsible for Rose's death.

Digging deeper reveals a hard-packed limestone floor beneath the layers of shell and bone. Some sort of symbol appears to be etched into the stone floor (see **Clue Six: The Arcane Symbol**, following).

CLUE SIX: THE ARCANE SYMBOL

Clearing the dust and bones away, the investigators can see the full extent of the symbol carved on the floor. It looks like an ornate sigil. Call for an **Occult** or a **Cthulhu Mythos** roll: if successful, the investigator realizes that the sigil has characteristics that suggest it is a ward, meant to stop something from escaping or perhaps to bind something to this place.

Keeper note: the magical sigil binds the creature to the cellar but requires the Blackwood ring to be worn by a living descendant of Wizard Blackwood to be fully effective. Whether the Occult or Cthulhu Mythos roll is successful or not, those viewing the sigil find it difficult to tear their gaze from it, as it appears to writhe before their eyes! Call for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss).

CLUE SEVEN: THE BINDING RING

Ask each investigator digging into the floor to make a **Luck** roll: the investigator with the lowest rolled success finds the ring that Arthur dropped—the Blackwood family ring. This roll may be repeated each round while the investigators dig.

If an investigator related to Arthur Blackwood puts the binding ring on, the magical sigil is re-energized. The ring-wearing investigator instantly knows they can command the creature to return to its prison beneath the seal—although they do not know it, they could actually banish the monster back to its home dimension; see **An Option: Destroying the Seal** (following) for details on how they might discover this fact.

When commanded to return to its prison, the entity emits an ear-piercing, hideous scream of anguish and rage (1/1D3 **Sanity** loss), and the creature is drawn down into the sigil before the investigators' eyes; all the while, a sickly blood-red light illuminates the cellar, only winking out as the last of the creature finally vanishes beneath the floor. Bound once more, the curse of the Blackwoods is unable to cause further harm.

AN OPTION: DESTROYING THE SIGIL

Having found the sigil (**Clue Six: The Arcane Symbol**), the investigators may attempt to destroy it in the belief that it somehow releases and banishes the entity in the cellar. Taking such a course of action is risky as no one really knows what will happen, although a successful skill roll may provide a hint.

Occult or **Cthulhu Mythos** roll (Regular success):

- Destroying the sigil may break the bond holding the creature in the cellar.

Occult or **Cthulhu Mythos** roll (Hard success):

- Destroying the sigil will release the creature but does not guarantee it will be banished.

Occult or **Cthulhu Mythos** roll (Extreme success):

- Destroying the sigil will release the creature but only a person of Blackwood blood who wears the Blackwood family ring can command it to depart from whence it came—this information is only available if the investigators have already found the ring.

Of course, clever players may guess (rather than succeed in a roll) what destroying the sigil will do, depending on the clues they have amassed so far—this is fine, as although they "think" they know, their knowledge is not confirmed by a skill roll; thus, the outcome of breaking the sigil remains conjecture and a risky enterprise.

Keeper note: those attempting to break the sigil may note, with a successful **INT** roll, that the monster stops attacking—it wants to be free, so allows the investigators to continue unhindered. This is a big clue to warn the investigators that what they are doing could be bad! When the sigil is destroyed the monster is free and resumes its attacks to destroy the investigators and, should that task be completed, it is free to leave and pursue its scheme to kill the Blackwood family line. Of course, if the investigators have already found the ring, the creature's actions are altered: knowing that the ring bearer can banish it, the creature does not hold off its attacks—it cannot consent to fall under the power of the ring again—and fights to kill as many of the investigators as it can.

CONCLUSION

If the investigators recover Rose's skull and manage to escape, destroy, or neutralize the creature in the cellar, then they potentially have the evidence they need to clear Arthur Blackwood's name—or at least cause reasonable doubt that he was the murderer, thanks to the evidence of an "animal" attack on the recovered bones. Even the presence of the sigil carved in the cellar could be spun to suggest that an unidentified third party was involved in Mrs. Blackwood's death (cultists, escaped lunatic, and so on)—if the investigators have the presence of mind to take a photograph of it before they leave (assuming they found it).

The rest of the evidence—the journal and the note (**Clue Three: An Old Box**, page 44), along with the newspaper articles (**Clue Four: A Scrapbook**, page 47)—are really only of interest to Arthur and his family, and are likely to muddy the waters if presented as evidence to an outsider. In fact, claiming that a malign entity from beyond this dimension was responsible for killing Rose probably guarantees that Arthur (and whoever else tries to back up his story) receives a one-way ticket to the nearest asylum.

REWARDS

The Keeper may bestow the following rewards on any surviving investigators upon completion of this scenario.

- Discovering the scrapbook and fully realizing the Blackwood family good luck: +1 Sanity point.
- Finding and passing the skull to the police, helping to exonerate Arthur Blackwood: +1D4 Sanity points.
- Successfully trapping the creature back under the sigil: +1D6 Sanity points.
- Destroying the sigil and banishing the creature to its home dimension: +1D8 Sanity points.

EPILOGUE

Now that the scenario is over, finish off with a brief summary of what's just taken place. Be prepared to answer any questions the players might have regarding various elements of the plot and let them enjoy their successes. After all, their investigators have just faced off against a terrifying creature of darkness and (hopefully) lived to tell the tale!

THE MONSTER

The Creature of Darkness, *manifestation of hate and malice*

Although currently trapped within the cabin's floor by the sigil, the creature's dimension of origin is vastly different than our own Earthly one. It appears as a mass of shadowy black tentacles, tipped with orifices ringed with needle-sharp teeth. The creature has no discernable head or eyes, but it does have an undulating central mass from which the tentacles originate. Close proximity reveals its stench, like that of rotting eggs and the open grave.

STR 70	**CON** 250	**SIZ** 80	**DEX** 35	**INT** 110
APP —	**POW** 220	**EDU** —	**SAN** —	**HP** 33
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 44	

Special Powers

Move through shadows: the creature can use shadows as portals, allowing it to move from shadow to shadow within a 20 yard/meter radius. Each "jump" costs 1 magic point. The creature uses this ability for surprise attacks: allow an investigator to make a Listen roll; if failed, the creature gets a surprise attack against its oblivious target.

Telekinesis: the creature is able to hurl objects through the air, directed against the investigators as an attack or to distract them. This ability costs 5 magic points to activate, plus 1 magic point per point of SIZ of the object being moved (e.g., a jar full of nails or a hammer costs 3 magic points beyond the activation cost, a spade or shovel 6 points more, and so on). The Keeper should determine the damage caused by differing objects (referring to the item damages provided in **Searching the Cellar**, page 42, for comparison).

Attacks per round: 2 (may only attack one target per round).

Fighting: the creature can choose to lash out with its tentacles for 1D4 damage, or it can attempt its bite and hold maneuver, following up with its rip and tear maneuver if it achieves enough successes, as described below.

Bite and hold (mnvr): if successful, one of the creature's tentacles loops around a limb; its teeth then latch onto the immobilized appendage, inflicting 1 point of damage. The creature needs to perform this maneuver successfully five times to fully secure a human target (both arms, both legs, and the head). The victim may attempt to break free of each hold with an opposed STR roll. Steadfast comrades may also attempt to sever a tentacle gripping a friend's head, arms, or legs with a successful attack roll—4 points of damage (after armor has been deducted) is enough to cause a tentacle to release its grip. Note that a comrade's fumbled attack roll means their attack hurts their friend rather than the creature.

Rip and tear: this attack is only possible once all of the target's limbs, along with their head, have been successfully held. If an investigator has been fully secured by the creature, call for an opposed roll (instead of the creature's attack roll), with the target's CON opposing the creature's STR. If the creature wins, it attempts to literally tear them limb from limb, causing 5D6+1D4 damage in the process. Should the target win, they suffer only half damage. Those witnessing someone coming to such a sticky end should make a Sanity roll (1D3/1D6 loss).

Fighting	40% (20/8), damage 1D4
Bite and hold (mnvr)	40% (20/8), damage 1 + limb/head held
Rip and tear	can only be activated if all four limbs and head held; make opposed **CON** vs. **STR** roll (see above)
Dodge	20% (10/4)

Armor: 3-point extra-terrene biology—impaling weapons inflict half damage.
Sanity loss: 1D3/1D6 Sanity points to see the creature of darkness.

Name:

The Author,
age 33, relative of Arthur Blackwood

STR 40	**CON** 60	**SIZ** 70	**DEX** 45	**INT** 50
APP 75	**POW** 45	**EDU** 75	**SAN** 45	**HP** 13
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 9	**Luck:**

Luck: roll 3D6 and multiply result by five.

Fighting (Brawl)	40% (20/8), damage 1D3
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Skills

Anthropology	20% (10/4)
Art/Craft (Writing)	35% (17/7)
Charm	65% (32/13)
Climb	20% (10/4)
Credit Rating	25% (12/5)
Firearms (Handgun)	35% (17/7)
First Aid	30% (15/6)
History	45% (22/9)
Jump	25% (12/5)
Language (English)	75% (37/15)
Library Use	45% (22/9)
Listen	40% (20/8)
Mechanical Repair	10% (5/2)
Occult	65% (32/13)
Psychology	60% (30/12)
Spot Hidden	55% (27/11)
Stealth	20% (10/4)
Throw	35% (17/7)

Backstory

You are an author, specializing in books about the occult, unexplained mysteries, and other strange phenomena. You are related to Arthur Blackwood through your maternal great-grandmother. Arthur has requested your assistance in proving his innocence; he said it was vital that you meet with his defense attorney, Joseph Klein, then go on to the family's cabin up near Whitehall once you'd heard what he had to say.

You were once close to Arthur, but you drifted apart some time ago, so this request is a little odd, even though it fascinates you immensely from both a personal and a professional standpoint. Still, if you can't look to your family in your hour of need, who can you turn to?

- **Traits**: curious by nature; intrigued by the mystery of who murdered Rose Blackwood.
- **Ideology/beliefs**: you don't believe Arthur could be capable of murdering Rose, no matter what anyone else says— he loved her far too much for that.
- **Significant People**: your grandmother, who used to tell you all sorts of fascinating stories when you were a child. It's probably down to her that you now do what you do.

Roleplaying hooks

You wish to clear Arthur Blackwood's name and work out who murdered Rose. If Arthur didn't do it, who did? And could there even be a book in it for you?

Possessions

Pocket flashlight, notepad, and pen.

Player Notes:

Name:

The Private Detective, *age 41*

STR 70	**CON** 50	**SIZ** 65	**DEX** 80	**INT** 80
APP 35	**POW** 50	**EDU** 60	**SAN** 50	**HP** 11
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 10	**Luck:**

Luck: roll 3D6 and multiply result by five.

Combat

Fighting (Brawl)	45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4
.38 Auto Pistol	60% (30/12), damage 1D10
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Art/Craft (Photography)	35% (17/7)
Climb	30% (15/6)
Credit Rating	20% (10/4)
Disguise	35% (17/7)
Drive Auto	20% (10/4)
Fast Talk	45% (22/9)
First Aid	40% (20/8)
History	25% (12/5)
Intimidate	25% (12/5)
Jump	30% (15/6)
Language (English)	60% (30/12)
Law	25% (12/5)
Listen	40% (20/8)
Locksmith	35% (17/7)
Persuade	30% (15/6)
Psychology	70% (35/14)
Spot Hidden	55% (27/11)
Stealth	40% (20/8)
Throw	30% (15/6)

Backstory

You are a private detective, hired by the law office of Blackwood and Klein to assist in proving the innocence of one of the firm's partners: Arthur Blackwood. You are recognized by the court as having the authority to collect evidence from the cabin where Mrs. Rose Blackwood was murdered, so it may be used in Arthur's defense. Not that you're expecting to find much—after all, the police and the prosecution team have been all over the scene of the crime, so it's unlikely they'll have missed anything important. Still, there's no harm in looking, especially as there's a nice pay packet in it for you regardless of what you find.

- **Traits:** meticulous and professional.
- **Ideology/beliefs:** you wish you could believe that justice is blind, but you've been doing this job for far too long to fall for that one.
- **Treasured possessions**: your trusty .38 automatic pistol—it's got you out of many a jam in the past.

Roleplaying hook

You intend to do a good and thorough job, just like you always do. If you can also find evidence to prove Arthur is innocent, then so much the better.

Possessions

Good-quality flashlight and a .38 automatic pistol.

Player Notes:

Name:

The Psychologist, *age 55*

STR 30	**CON** 40	**SIZ** 55	**DEX** 40	**INT** 65
APP 60	**POW** 60	**EDU** 70	**SAN** 60	**HP** 9
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 5	**MP:** 12	**Luck:**

Luck: roll 3D6 and multiply result by five.

Combat

Fighting (Brawl)	25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge	20% (10/4)

Skills

Anthropology	30% (15/6)
Climb	20% (10/4)
Credit Rating	40% (20/8)
Firearms (Handgun)	20% (10/4)
First Aid	60% (30/12)
Jump	20% (10/4)
Language (English)	70% (35/14)
Language (Latin)	10% (5/2)
Library Use	45% (22/9)
Listen	45% (22/9)
Medicine	60% (30/12)
Natural World	25% (12/5)
Occult	10% (5/2)
Persuade	40% (20/8)
Psychoanalysis	65% (32/13)
Psychology	50% (25/10)
Spot Hidden	35% (17/7)
Stealth	20% (10/4)
Throw	20% (10/4)

Backstory

You are a psychologist, hired by the law office of Blackwood and Klein to assist in proving the innocence of Arthur Blackwood in the small matter of the murder of his wife, Rose. Your expertise is required to ascertain Arthur Blackwood's mental state at the time of the murder; thus, in visiting the murder scene, you hope to build a better picture of Arthur and determine whether or not he's fit to take the stand at his upcoming trial.

- **Traits**: questioning and broad-minded.
- **Ideology/beliefs**: never take anyone at face value; after all, everyone has their secrets.
- **Treasured Possessions**: your qualifications certificates—quite a few people didn't think you'd stick the course, but these are the proof that they were wrong.

Roleplaying hooks

Determine whether Arthur Blackwood is, indeed, delusional. There's something about the Blackwood name that rings a bell in your mind; you vaguely remember your grandmother mentioning the Blackwood family back in your youth. If only you could remember more—perhaps it's important?

Possessions

A lantern you found in the Blackwood cabin's kitchen.

Player Notes:

Name:

The Architect,
age 34, friend of the Blackwood family

STR 35	**CON** 55	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 50	**INT** 50
APP 65	**POW** 60	**EDU** 70	**SAN** 60	**HP** 11
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 12	**Luck:**

Luck: roll 3D6 and multiply result by five.

Combat

Fighting (Brawl)	35% (17/7), damage 1D3
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Skills

Appraise	20% (10/4)
Art/Craft (Technical Drawing)	60% (30/12)
Charm	35% (17/7)
Climb	25% (12/5)
Credit Rating	60% (30/12)
Firearms (Handgun)	20% (10/4)
First Aid	30% (15/6)
Jump	20% (10/4)
Language (English)	70% (35/14)
Law	40% (20/8)
Library Use	25% (12/5)
Psychology	10% (5/2)
Science (Mathematics)	40% (20/8)
Spot Hidden	40% (20/8)
Stealth	20% (10/4)
Throw	20% (10/4)

Backstory

You are an architect and also a close friend of Arthur Blackwood. And Rose, too, while she was still alive, God rest her poor soul. Arthur has requested that you assist the law office of his business partner, Joseph Klein, to help prove his innocence. You're not really sure what he expects you to do, but Arthur's always been good to you, so how could you refuse?

- **Traits:** friendly and helpful, but distinctly bemused by your current situation.
- **Ideology/beliefs:** architecture can be artistic as well as functional—just look at Frank Lloyd Wright's work.
- **Meaningful location:** the college where you did your architectural training. Ah, those were the days.

Roleplaying hooks

You are horrified by Arthur's plight and want to help clear his good name. You've also been itching to take a look at the famed Blackwood holiday cabin—you've heard the scenery is spectacular, even if the building's design is allegedly a little humdrum and folksy. Still, not everything can be cutting edge design, can it?

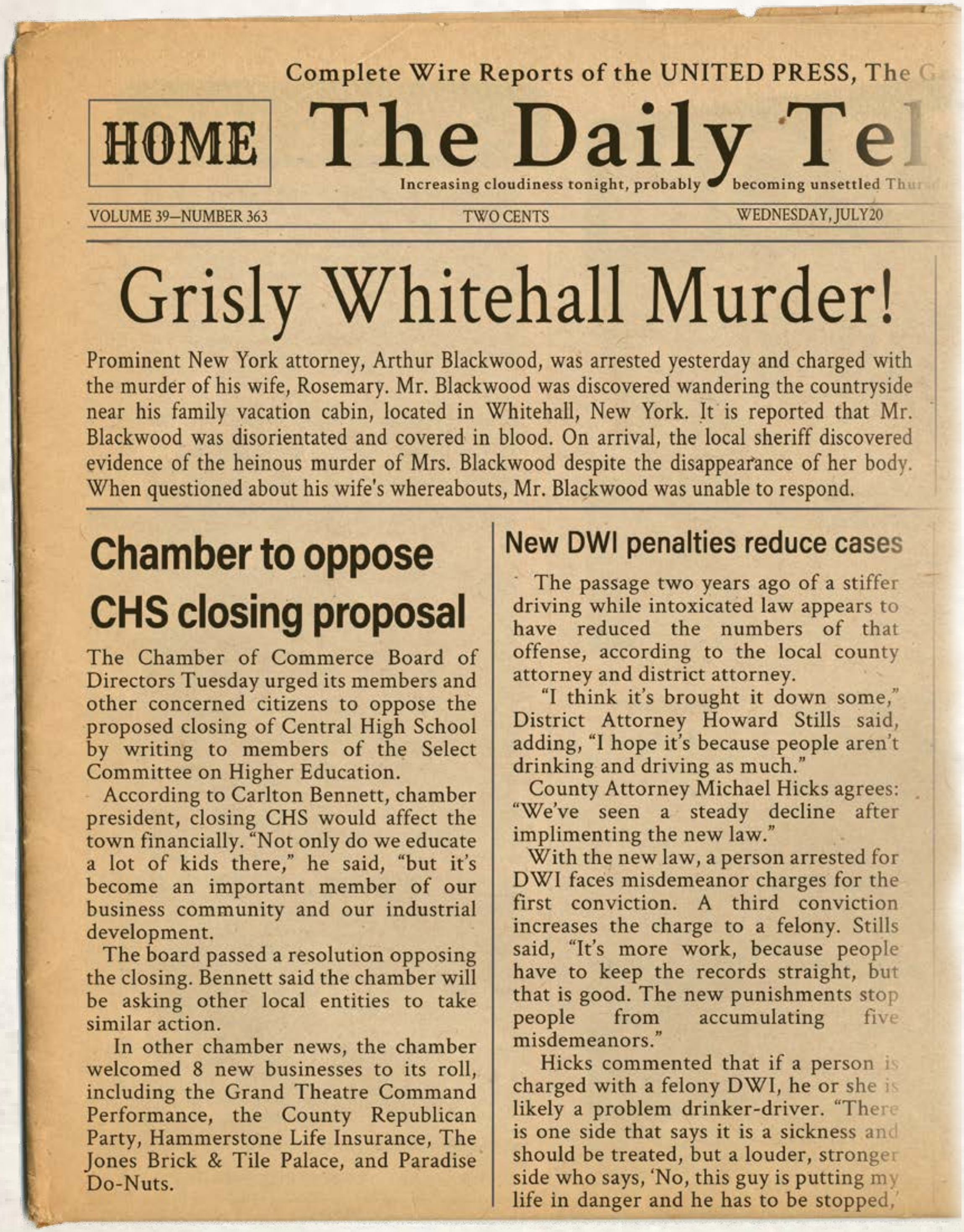
Equipment

A lantern you found in the cabin's kitchen.

Player Notes:

COLLECTED PLAYER HANDOUTS

Handout: Cellar 1



Complete Wire Reports of the UNITED PRESS, The G

HOME **The Daily Tel**

Increasing cloudiness tonight, probably becoming unsettled Thur

VOLUME 39—NUMBER 363 TWO CENTS WEDNESDAY, JULY20

Grisly Whitehall Murder!

Prominent New York attorney, Arthur Blackwood, was arrested yesterday and charged with the murder of his wife, Rosemary. Mr. Blackwood was discovered wandering the countryside near his family vacation cabin, located in Whitehall, New York. It is reported that Mr. Blackwood was disorientated and covered in blood. On arrival, the local sheriff discovered evidence of the heinous murder of Mrs. Blackwood despite the disappearance of her body. When questioned about his wife's whereabouts, Mr. Blackwood was unable to respond.

Chamber to oppose CHS closing proposal

The Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors Tuesday urged its members and other concerned citizens to oppose the proposed closing of Central High School by writing to members of the Select Committee on Higher Education.

According to Carlton Bennett, chamber president, closing CHS would affect the town financially. "Not only do we educate a lot of kids there," he said, "but it's become an important member of our business community and our industrial development.

The board passed a resolution opposing the closing. Bennett said the chamber will be asking other local entities to take similar action.

In other chamber news, the chamber welcomed 8 new businesses to its roll, including the Grand Theatre Command Performance, the County Republican Party, Hammerstone Life Insurance, The Jones Brick & Tile Palace, and Paradise Do-Nuts.

New DWI penalties reduce cases

The passage two years ago of a stiffer driving while intoxicated law appears to have reduced the numbers of that offense, according to the local county attorney and district attorney.

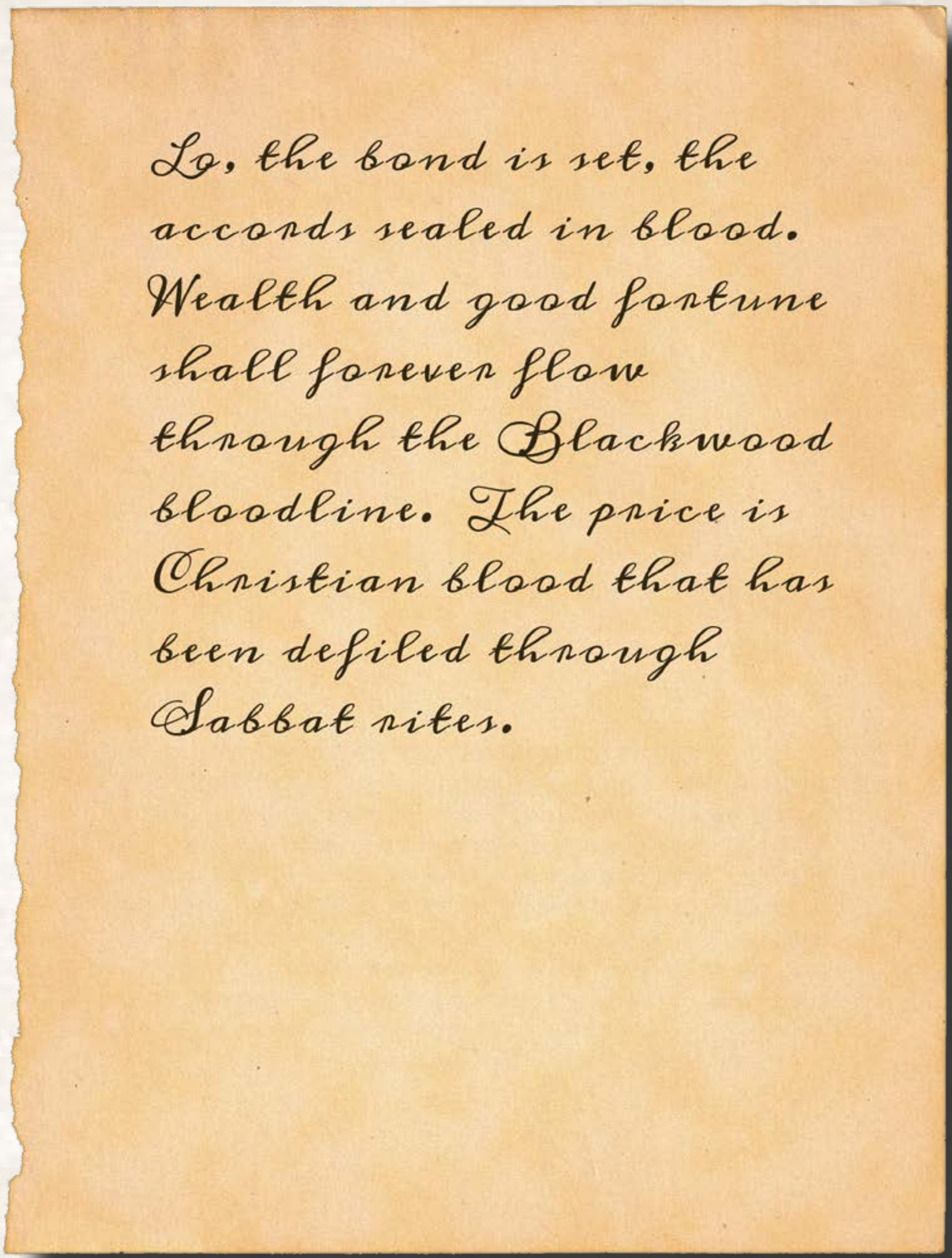
"I think it's brought it down some," District Attorney Howard Stills said, adding, "I hope it's because people aren't drinking and driving as much."

County Attorney Michael Hicks agrees: "We've seen a steady decline after implimenting the new law."

With the new law, a person arrested for DWI faces misdemeanor charges for the first conviction. A third conviction increases the charge to a felony. Stills said, "It's more work, because people have to keep the records straight, but that is good. The new punishments stop people from accumulating five misdemeanors."

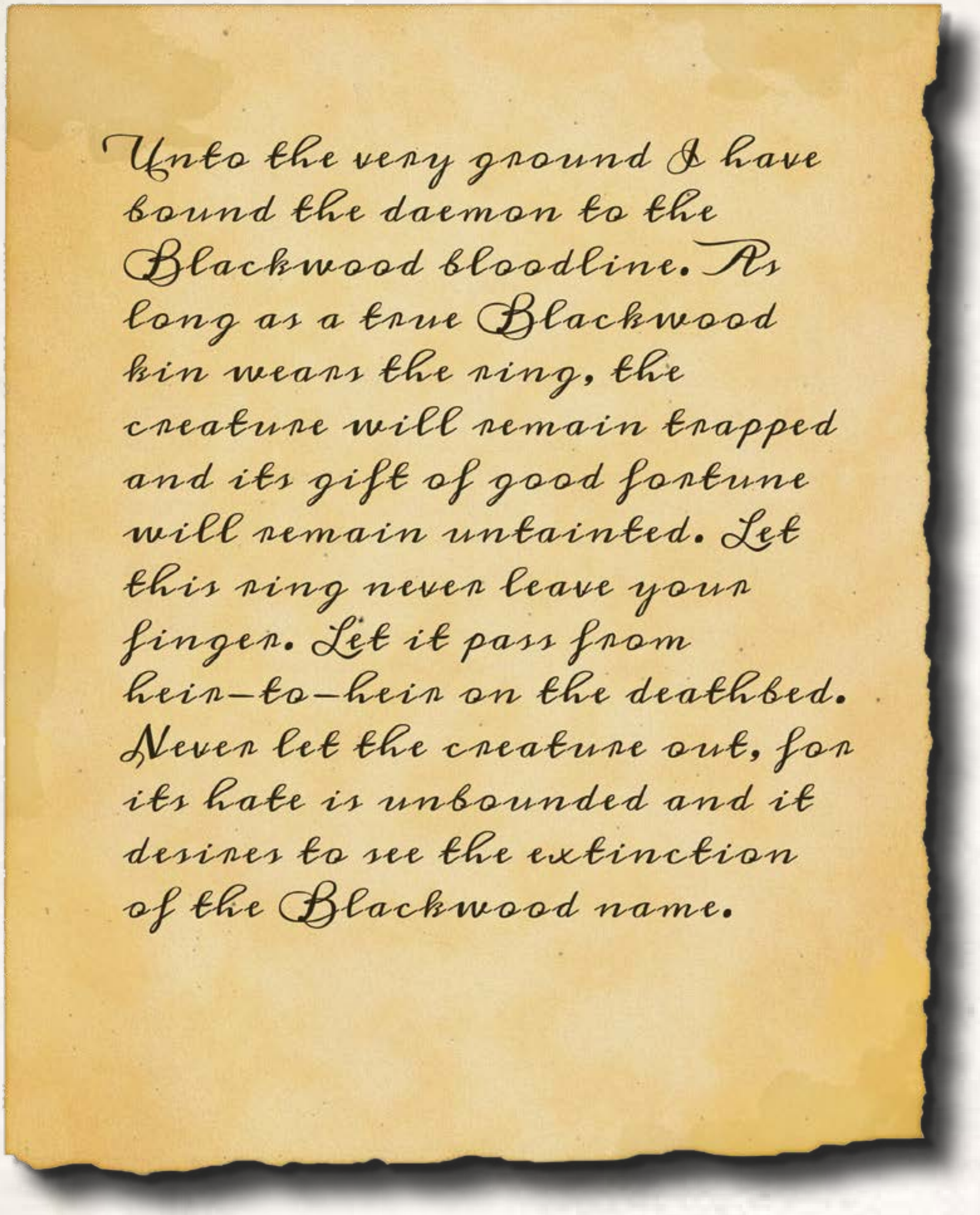
Hicks commented that if a person is charged with a felony DWI, he or she is likely a problem drinker-driver. "There is one side that says it is a sickness and should be treated, but a louder, stronger side who says, 'No, this guy is putting my life in danger and he has to be stopped,'

Handout: Cellar 2

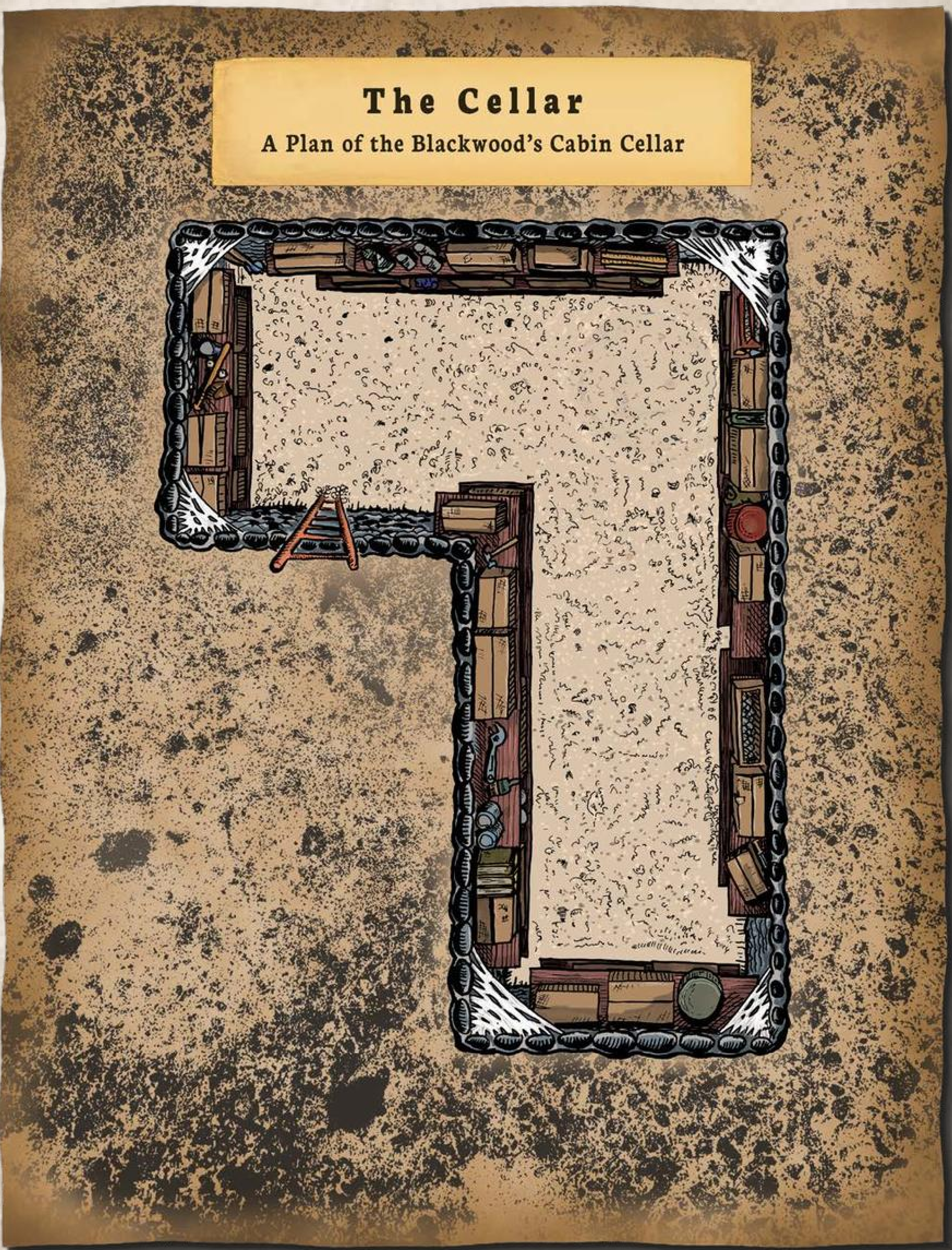


Lo, the bond is set, the accords sealed in blood. Wealth and good fortune shall forever flow through the Blackwood bloodline. The price is Christian blood that has been defiled through Sabbat rites.

Handout: Cellar 3



Unto the very ground I have bound the daemon to the Blackwood bloodline. As long as a true Blackwood kin wears the ring, the creature will remain trapped and its gift of good fortune will remain untainted. Let this ring never leave your finger. Let it pass from heir-to-heir on the deathbed. Never let the creature out, for its hate is unbounded and it desires to see the extinction of the Blackwood name.


The Cellar
A Plan of the Blackwood's Cabin Cellar

Player map for What's in the Cellar?

THE DEAD BOARDER

A grisly discovery leads to a mind-shattering experience!

The Dead Boarder is set on Sunday, June 21st, 1931 in Ma Shanks' Boarding House, Providence, Rhode Island. Not only is Prohibition still in force, making the sale of alcohol illegal, but the effects of the Great Depression are also kicking in, and everyone is hard pressed trying to make ends meet.

INTRODUCTION

During this scenario, the investigators must risk life and limb—and their very sanity—in order to fathom out the mystery they unwittingly stumble into while checking on the well-being of a fellow resident. At its core is a murder investigation, which centers on the discovery of a body in a locked room. As events unfold and the investigators discover a variety of hidden (and not so hidden) clues, it becomes apparent that the "murder" was, in fact, a ritual suicide. Ultimately, the dead man transforms into a monster, provoking the investigators to act against the risen creature if they are to survive.

SCENARIO STRUCTURE

If you are planning on running *The Dead Boarder* as a one-hour scenario, the timings generally work out as shown below. If, however, you are running it as a longer game (perhaps if you have more than four investigators), then each section after **Ready to Play** will take around double the time listed here, if not a little longer. As always, remember that these are only guidelines and can be ignored or adjusted as best suits your game and the amount of time you have available.

- **Set Up**: the Keeper talks briefly about the set up for the scenario and the pre-generated investigators on offer (or the most suitable types of investigator if players wish to create or adjust their own); if there are new players, the Keeper may also need to give a quick overview of the rules before reading out the relevant parts of the **Setting Up** section (page 64). Investigator sheets are handed out and players look over them, then introduce their characters (if required).
- **Ready to Play:** (10–15 minutes in.) The Keeper confirms that the players are ready and reads out the relevant parts of the **Start: A Grisly Scene** section (page 64), answering any immediate questions that arise.
- **The Monster Rises!:** (45 minutes in.) Either when the investigators have found *The Book of Dream Memories* (**The Ornate Bookcase**, page 69) and had a cursory read through it (**The Book of Dream Memories**, page 71), or when they seem ready to leave the room with their findings (or any other appropriate trigger point, such as the end of the session approaching), the monster inhabits Gardiner's body and combat begins.
- **The Police Arrive/Conclusion:** (55 minutes in.) From the various times this scenario has been run at conventions, we know that fighting the monster tends to run for at least 10 minutes, although some lucky groups have managed to push the creature out of the window, ending the fight sooner. If necessary, have the cops arrive to fight or scare the monster away, ending the scenario and saving the investigators (which may, of course, lead to further adventures in the future…).
- **Epilogue:** close up with a short epilogue and answer any questions the players might have about the scenario.

Opposite: The monster rises!

BACKGROUND

James Gardiner was a dreamer and, just like Randolph Carter from Lovecraft's tales, he was a frequent visitor to the Dreamlands. For some reason, he lost his ability to travel to the realm of dreams and, in his despair, he turned from a recluse into a madman. Desperate for any clue that would lead him back to the world of dream, he sought out all manner of occult and mystical knowledge.

Thus, he eventually found *The Book of Dream Memories* (page 71), a rambling, disjointed record of an Irish monk's nighttime adventures, written sometime in the 9th century CE. Gardiner set to work translating the Greek text and was eventually able to decipher a ritual that he believed would allow him to transfer his consciousness to the Dreamlands on a permanent basis.

Over the past year or so, Gardiner has been performing an associated ritual from the book that requires him to scarify his skin with certain arcane patterns, as well as carrying out what the tome calls "meditation" to prepare his mind for its alleged journey. Unfortunately for Gardiner, the book is cursed. Instead of transporting his consciousness as he believes, it actually acts as a gateway for an otherworldly creature to materialize in our world using his body as a vessel. All of his preparation work has really been a means to establish a psychic connection to this Entity from Beyond. The Entity is largely composed of the will of an ancient sorcerer, long banished from this world for his wicked deeds. In times past, he wrote the entries that, in later years, formed the basis of *The Book of Dream Memories*, including the diabolical trap that allows his utterly insane mind to inhabit the body of the one foolish enough to perform the tainted ritual—the trap that Gardiner subsequently fell into.

The ritual's last step is to "free thy mind from thy fleshy prison," which involves a particularly gruesome self-sacrifice. Gardiner enacted this final step two days ago. While the strange geometric scarring and mental regimen paved the way for the Entity from Beyond to possess his body, Gardiner, in his madness and desperation, got it wrong and performed the ritual too early. The Entity may only cross between dimensions at midday on the Summer Solstice—which just so happens to be today. Thus, approximately 45 minutes after the investigators enter Gardiner's room (if playing a one-hour game; longer, if not), the creature manifests in the madman's corpse and rises as the Gardiner-Thing (whose profile can be found in the **The Monster** section on page 77).

61972
2
Weybosset Street, Providence, R. I.
LOEW'S STATE
HOTEL
BOND
ROCHESTER CLOTHES
LOEW'S

A Weybosset Street postcard from Providence, RI

Keeper note: the Dreamlands are another reality created by the dreams of humans; a strange and often bizarre place where human dreamers may visit and explore. H. P. Lovecraft wrote a number of stories set in the Dreamlands, such as *The Silver Key* and *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*.

MA SHANKS' BOARDING HOUSE

The boarding house where this scenario takes place is owned by the redoubtable Ma Shanks. It is a three-story building, positioned at the edge of Federal Hill in Providence, near to the Italian neighborhood. It is home to various immigrants to Rhode Island, as well as the Landlord/Landlady (one of the pre-generated investigators) who cooks the meals and runs the place on behalf of Ma Shanks.

There is a kitchen, dining room, large parlor, and storage area on the first (ground) floor. The basement has a space for doing laundry. The second floor has four guest rooms (accommodating three of the pre-generated investigators, as well as one larger room shared by the Skirgaila family) and a shared bathroom, while on the third floor are Ma Shanks' rooms (the building's owner), and those belonging to the Landlord/Landlady, James Gardiner, and Mrs. Madeira.

Other Residents

Besides the investigators, there are several other long-term residents at Ma Shanks.

- **Loretta "Ma" Shanks:** owns the boarding house. In her old age, she is near deaf and employs the Landlord/Landlady to collect the rents and keep the building in order. She is currently visiting relatives and is not at home during the scenario.
- **The Skirgailas:** a Lithuanian family consisting of two sisters (Anikke and Dovana) who work as laundresses, one brother (Petras) who is unemployed, and another brother (Konstantinas) who works in an illegal speakeasy. The Skirgailas are out of the building during the scenario, unless a player decides to create an investigator who is part of the family (**About the Investigators**, page 62).
- **Tommy:** the 11-year-old son of the Landlord/Landlady. He's diligent and helpful around the house. Once Gardiner's body is found, Tommy volunteers to fetch the police.
- **Mrs. Madeira:** lives across the hall from James Gardiner. Only in her late-20s, she is still grieving for her husband who died in an industrial accident last March. She is in her room when the scenario begins and is a potential source of information concerning Gardiner's comings and goings.
- **James Gardiner:** found dead at the start of the scenario.

Greetings from
PROVIDENCE
R.I.
72672
2672

A Providence, RI post card

ABOUT THE INVESTIGATORS

Four pre-generated investigators are provided for use with *The Dead Boarder*. Each has a reason to be in the room and all but one has some form of connection to the "murdered" man.

If the players decide they wish to make use of the pre-generated investigators, ensure they read their sheets before play begins so they can apply the information provided to direct their characters into the heart of the action. Each investigator is gender neutral, allowing the players to decide whether they wish to play a male, female, or non-binary character. A brief description of each of the pre-generated investigators, and their links to James Gardiner, is provided below.

The Landlord/Landlady, *age 38*

Lives on the third floor and is secretly in love with James Gardiner. Whether this is forbidden love during the time period because of the player's gender selection or simply unrequited love is up to the player.

- **Traits:** highly protective of those they care for; lonely and in search of love.
- **Roleplaying hook:** has a personal drive to discover what happened to Gardiner.

The Bookstore Owner, *age 29*

Lives on the second floor. Owns a second-hand bookstore in Providence, specializing in esoteric tomes. The Bookstore Owner is in a dire financial position owing to the Depression combined with the general public's lack of interest in the specialty nature of the shop.

Some time ago, Gardiner borrowed several books on dream study and a translation guide for Greek from the Bookstore Owner, who is now keen to get these books back. In particular, the Bookstore Owner wants *The Dreamer's Dictionary* returned as a wealthy buyer has offered serious money to purchase it—money that will make all the difference to the impoverished investigator. The loaned books (all of which can be found in Gardiner's room) are:

- *Myths and Legends of Ancient Greece and Rome*, by E.M. Berens.
- *The Interpretation of Dreams*, by Sigmund Freud.
- *The Dreamer's Dictionary*, a rare first edition.
- *A Primer in Greek Vocabulary*.

- **Traits:** afraid they are about to lose the business they've worked so hard to build, but determined to save it, come what may.
- **Roleplaying hook:** desperate to get the books back from Gardiner.

The Business Associate, *age 34*

Lives on the second floor. The Business Associate is a shady character and a bootlegger, with connections to local gangsters. Some months back, Gardiner asked the Business Associate, who has a reputation for acquiring hard to find items, to obtain two knives crafted from obsidian.

More recently, in return for getting the obsidian knives, the Business Associate asked Gardiner to "cook the books" for them and to produce a false accounting ledger to hide their dubious business dealings (which includes skimming profits from the Mob). With the Mob breathing down their neck, the Business Associate wants their accounts (and the false ledger) back from Gardiner.

- **Traits:** once full of self-confidence, now they feel as if they're always looking over one shoulder.
- **Roleplaying hook:** wants to get their real accounts and the doctored ledger back from Gardiner.

The Nosy Neighbor, *age 58*

Lives in the smallest room on the second floor. A dreadful gossip, forever poking their nose into other people's business. The Nosy Neighbor is out of work and has pressing financial troubles, not least of which is the rent.

- **Traits:** some call them a nosy gossip, but they don't see it that way.
- **Roleplaying hook:** wants to help the Landlord/Landlady and get into their good books (mostly as a way of getting them to defer the payment of this month's rent) or find some other way of covering their costs. In addition, will jump at any chance to poke their nose into other people's business.

Fewer Than Four Players

If you have fewer than four players but are still wanting to use the pre-generated investigators provided, we recommend that you use the Landlord/Landlady and the Bookstore Owner in a two-player game, adding in the Business Associate if you have a third player. With a single player, the Bookstore Owner is the best option.

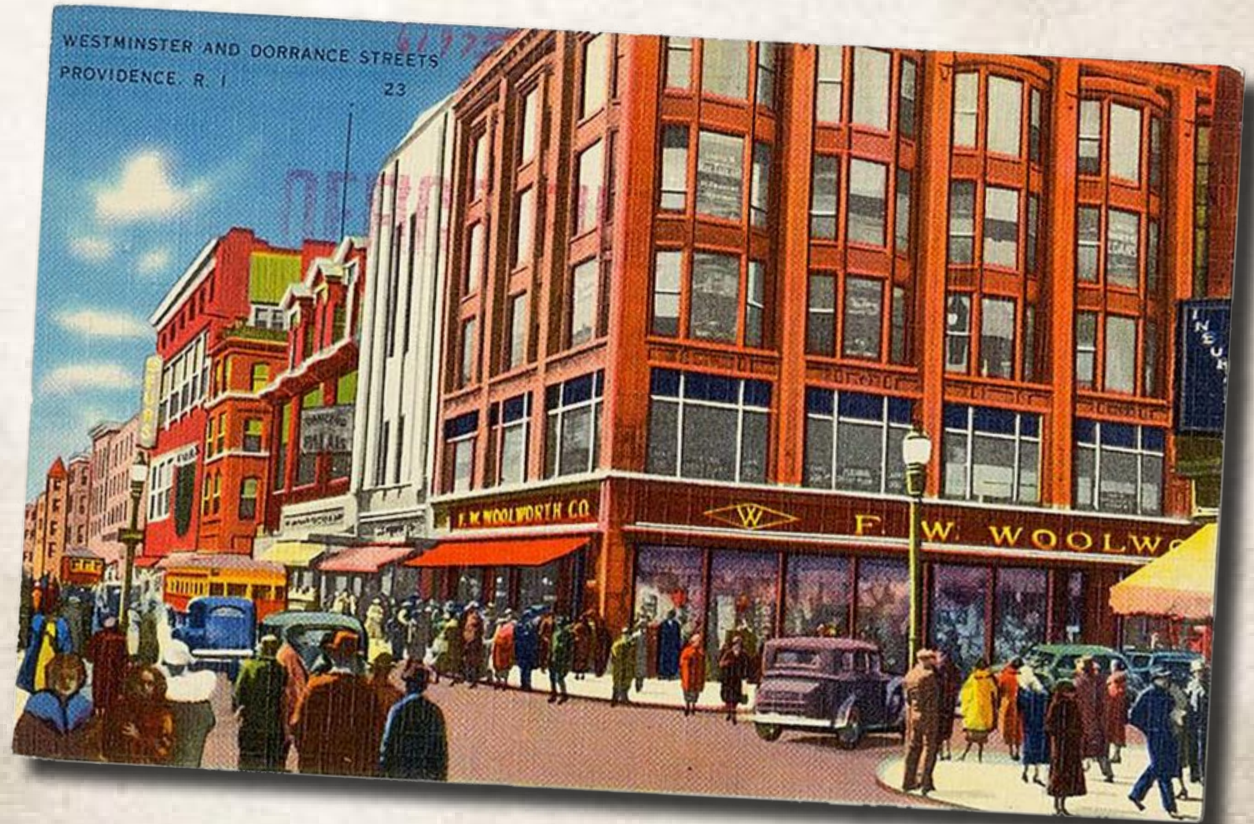
Additional/Alternate Investigators

If there are more than four players, or if they wish to either use existing investigators or create new ones for the scenario, then it is essential that they have some link to James Gardiner—be it real or imagined—or the boarding house, so that they are in the right (or wrong) place when his body is discovered. For example, an additional investigator could be a fifth member of the Skirgaila family—like Petras, also currently unemployed and down on their luck, but aware that there might be some valuable objects in Gardiner's room that are ripe for the taking. They don't necessarily have a genuine link to Gardiner, but they'll need to come up with one to get into his room.

Another potential additional investigator could be the local beat cop—in fact, they'd likely be the first person Tommy would run to in the event of trouble. So, while they might arrive on the scene a little later than everyone else, they'd have a legitimate reason to enter the room and to call for reinforcements once the going gets tough.

If the players are using their own existing investigators, then developing a link to Gardiner or the boarding house is just as important. Perhaps they're staying at Ma Shanks' place, either permanently or on their way through Providence, replacing one or more of the pre-generated characters as occupants. As a result, perhaps they've become intrigued by Gardiner's strange behavior or the tales told to them about him by their neighbors—they may even have struck up their own friendship with the dead man, depending on their background. Or, perhaps, they're visiting friends or family living at the boarding house (for example, one of the pre-generated characters or any of the other residents) and know either a little or a lot about that person's relationship with their strange housemate. They may even have come (or been sent) to Ma Shanks' to collect other esoteric items Gardiner collected—after all, the Bookstore Owner and the Business Associate are unlikely to be the only people Gardiner approached for assistance in the last twelve months—although make sure to seed some of these items around his room for the investigators to find if this is the case.

If the players decide not to use the pre-generated investigators but create new ones instead, then useful skills for their characters to have include: Accounting, Appraise, First Aid, Language (Ancient Greek/Greek), Occult, and Spot Hidden, along with any of the social skills (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade).



A Westminster and Dorrance Streets postcard from Providence, RI

SETTING UP

Read aloud or paraphrase the following to introduce the players to the game, adjusting it as necessary (for example, Landlady instead of Landlord):

The year is 1931. You live in Providence, Rhode Island, in Ma Shanks' Boarding House. Times are tough. The Great Depression means that immigrants and long-time residents, including you, are experiencing hard times.

Mr. James Gardiner, a recluse who lives in your boarding house, has not been seen or heard from for two days. Each of you has a reason to see if he is in his room. Through persuasion, bribes, or your own means, the landlord of this boarding house has been convinced to unlock the door and check on the tenant, while also letting you inside.

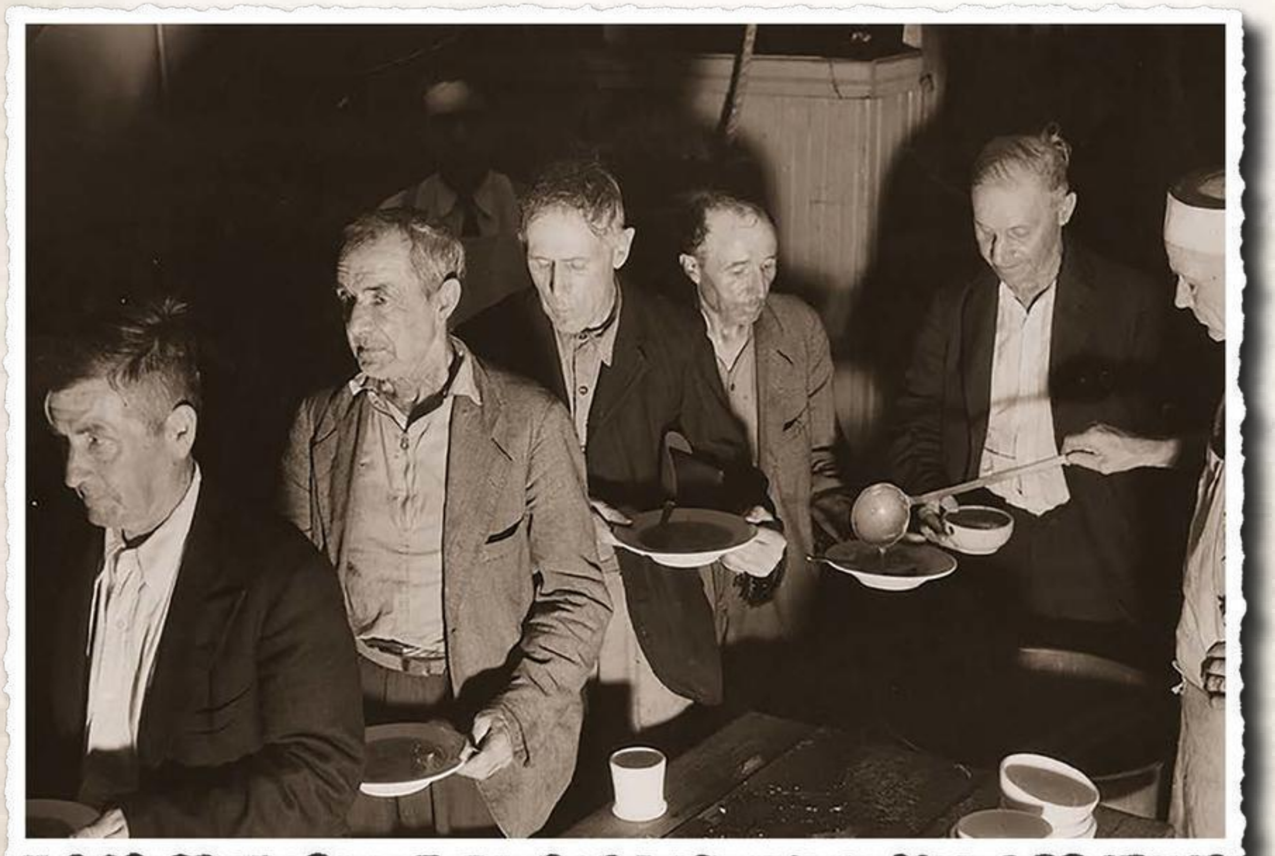
Describe the pre-generated investigators to the players and ask them to select one each. Then, give the players a chance to read over their chosen investigator and answer any questions they might have about them. Or, if they've decided to use their own investigators, work with them to create suitable links to James Gardiner so they have a reason to be present when the landlord/landlady opens his room. Finally, if they haven't already done so, ask them to decide upon names for their investigators, then get them to briefly introduce their characters to the rest of the group. Once done, move on to **Start: A Grisly Scene** (following).

If the players are new to *Call of Cthulhu*, then you may also need to give them a brief overview of the rules before you go any further (**Introducing the Rules**, page 6).

START: A GRISLY SCENE

Read the following text aloud or paraphrase it for the players (adjusting as necessary if the players are using their own investigators):

You have all gathered outside the room of Mr. James Gardiner. He's not been seen for at least two days and everyone is getting concerned for his well-being. The landlord rattles some keys, finding the one for Gardiner's room. Then, knocking once more just to be sure there is no response, the key is turned in the lock and the door is slowly opened.



Hard times during the Great Depression

From within comes the lingering smell of candles, long since burned out, and something sickly-sweet and copper-like. Looking in, you see a shocking scene. Framed in the shafts of sunlight streaming through gaps in the curtains. A body!

The corpse is lying on a tarpaulin, stretched out on the floor. You can see blood. Such a lot of blood. The man's body and clothing are covered in it. It looks as though he somehow fell over from a kneeling position. The dead man is wearing a green tweed coat and a brown sweater-vest—the clothes Mr. Gardiner usually wears. It must be Mr. Gardiner!

Mr. Gardiner's right hand is caked with dried blood…

Ask the players to make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss). For those investigators failing the roll, describe an involuntary action that expresses their shock on finding the body, using the suggestions in the **Insane Investigators** box on page 75, if you so desire. Or, if they are more experienced, ask the players to describe an appropriate involuntary action of their own. Then, ask the players what they want to do; for example, presumably they want to go inside and take a closer look? If necessary, remind the players that each of their investigators wants something from Gardiner and now is the perfect, if rather gruesome, time to go and get it.

CALLING FOR THE POLICE

Tommy, the Landlord/Landlady's son, is at the top of the stairs watching the goings-on, but not yet able to see into the room. Ask the investigators if they want to send Tommy to get a detective and, if necessary, remind the Landlord/Landlady that sending their son to fetch the police is an ideal way to keep him from seeing the blood-soaked horror within. If the Landlord/Landlady and/or the other investigators wish it, Tommy runs to the nearest police station to bring help. As mentioned in the **Scenario Structure** section (page 59), the police do not appear until near to the close of the scenario so that the investigators have plenty of time to get themselves into trouble before backup arrives. Of course, if one of the investigators is a police officer, they could appear on the scene much earlier, to ensure they can get involved more quickly.

THE POLICE

The police are a handy device in the Keeper's toolkit for this scenario. On discovering Gardiner's body, the investigators may indeed wish to call for official help—although there are plenty of reasons why they may also want to avoid doing so, depending on who they are. If they do decide to contact the police, Tommy (the Landlord/Landlady's son) volunteers to go in search of the local beat cop (if someone is playing them) or to the police station (if no one is playing a police character), allowing the investigators a chance to survey the scene and search the room before the forces of law and order arrive.

The police (Detective Lt. Milligan and Officer Malone; **Non-Player Characters**, page 76) and Tommy should only enter the action when you deem it suitable. Ideally, this happens near the climax of the scenario, bringing reinforcements in when either the investigators are down to a single person or when you only have a limited amount of time left before the end of the session and need to bring the proceedings to a close. The police guns should be able to end the encounter quickly, especially if the investigators know that aiming for the monster's head is the best bet for getting rid of it. If some of the investigators are dead by the time the police arrive, have the players take on the roles of the new arrivals, at least temporarily, so they can still take part in the scenario's conclusion.

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK

At first glance, everything in the room appears to be in order, except for the body on the tarpaulin. There doesn't seem to have been a fight in here. The furniture is upright and there are no bloody footprints anywhere. The only unusual trappings sit on the floor, in front of the corpse on the tarpaulin: a piece of blood-stained paper lies between two black candles, which have both burned down to their stubs.

Inside the room, going clockwise from the doorway, are: a wardrobe, bed, nightstand with lamp, an ornate bookcase that divides the room into two living areas, a window and radiator, a small table set in the corner (with two chairs and another lamp), a once-fancy upholstered chair, overhead cabinets built into one of the walls (underneath which is a counter top with an electric hot plate), and another table along the wall to the right of the door.

The room is large enough for six people to move around in, even as they step over the body; having more than two people in the sectioned-off bed area makes it crowded, since the bookcase is positioned to make this more of a sleeping alcove. The Keeper may wish to have the investigators make **DEX** rolls for their investigators to see if they accidentally step in any of Gardiner's congealed blood and begin tracking it around the room. Getting covered in blood is also a suitable consequence of failing most pushed rolls in this scenario, unless otherwise stated.

EXAMINING THE BODY

Gardiner appears to be dead—touching the cold body confirms this fact. Examining the corpse may reveal several clues, some of which require a suitable skill roll to uncover.

No roll needed:

- There is a deep cut, freshly made, around the head, as if a knife has traced a spiral from the crown to the neck.
- His clothes are blood-soaked. As his shirt is unbuttoned—the viewer can see strange marks on his chest.
- The blood is dry, suggesting this all took place some days ago.

First Aid roll (Regular success):

- The wounds on the head and neck are deep and appear hastily made. Blood loss was severe and inevitably fatal once the neck was slashed.
- The older scars on his body, arms, and legs appear to have been made over the course of some months (some are fresher than others).

Opposite: The Dead Boarder map

First Aid roll (Hard success):

- As above, plus it appears the wounds were self-inflicted.
- From the position and angle of the wounds, Gardiner appears to have been right-handed.
- The spiraling cut around the head appears to have begun at the top of the crown and worked down to the neck (it's evident that he had to move the knife between his hands to perform the cut).
- The neck wound was delivered in a swift and violent manner.

Spot Hidden roll (Regular or better success):

- Gardiner has scarification markings across the back of his hands, on his legs and arms, and across his blood-covered torso. They are shaped like small spirals. Closer examination of these markings reveals that they actually cover his entire body. The marks range in age, seemingly acquired over months of procedures.
- His face and head appear to be free of the older spiral scars.
- Lying in a pool of blood beneath the corpse is an obsidian blade (the "murder" weapon). If used as a weapon, it inflicts 1D6 damage. A successful **Appraise** roll reveals that the blade is worth $60 or more to the right collector.

Keeper note: if the body is moved, the knife can easily be found (no roll required).

If a search is made of the corpse's pockets, they are found to contain the following items:

- $1.47 in loose change.
- A wallet with identification for Mr. James Gardiner, and a further $2.
- A key chain, with a key to the room and one other smaller key (sized to fit a cupboard, cash box, or desk lock).
- A pack of matches, unlabeled. Six matches remain.

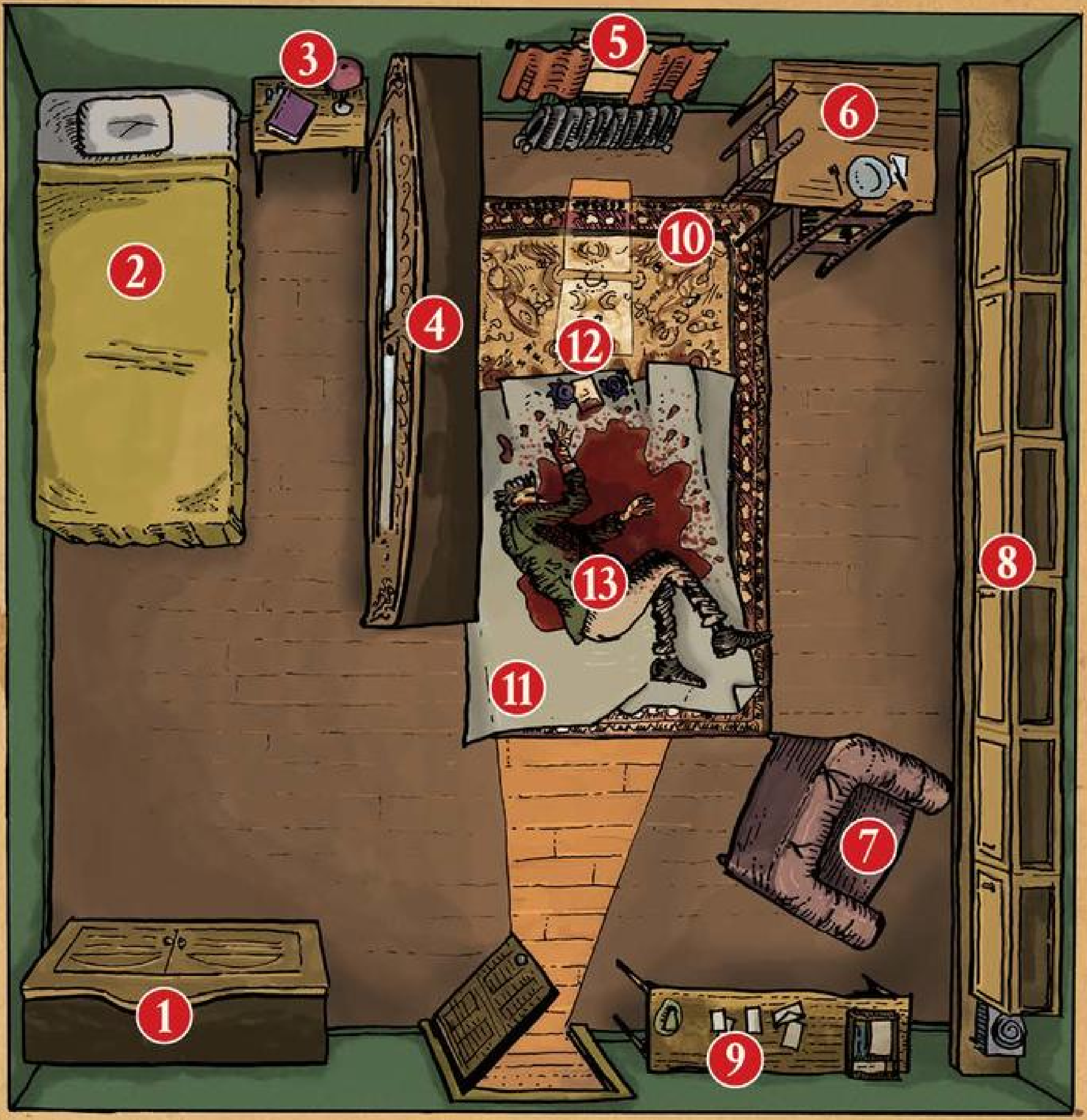
Keeper note: the smaller key fits the wooden box in the wardrobe.

THE TARP, CANDLES, AND PIECE OF PAPER

The tarpaulin, candles, and piece of paper, as well as most of the rest of the room, are splattered with dried blood. Fortunately, the waxed tarpaulin has protected a fine Oriental rug—meaning that the Landlord/Landlady will not have to spend considerable time cleaning bloodstains from it! A successful **Appraise** roll reveals the Oriental rug is worth a considerable sum of money—around $200—easily the most valuable thing in the room. Examining these various items may provide the following details:

THE DEAD BOARDER

A Plan of Mr. Gardiner's Room in Ma Shanks' Boarding House



Items of Interest

1. The Wardrobe
2. The Bed
3. The Nightstand
4. The Ornate Bookcase
5. The Window
6. The Table & Chairs
7. The Upholstered Chair
8. The Wall-Mounted Cabinets & Counter
9. The Long Table
10. The Oriental Rug
11. The Tarpaulin
12. The Candles & Paper
13. The Body

No roll needed:

- The paper is bloodstained and contains handwriting in a foreign language—give the player concerned **Handout: Boarder 1**.

Occult roll (Regular success):

- The paper, while heavily bloodstained, has some strange writing on it.
- Combined with the black candles, this all seems to be the accoutrements of some sort of gruesome ritual; however, there is not enough information in the ritual trappings to determine the intended result.

If the Bookstore Owner is looking at the paper, they recognize the language as Greek; if they succeed in a **Language (Ancient Greek/Greek)** roll, give the player **Handout: Boarder 2**.

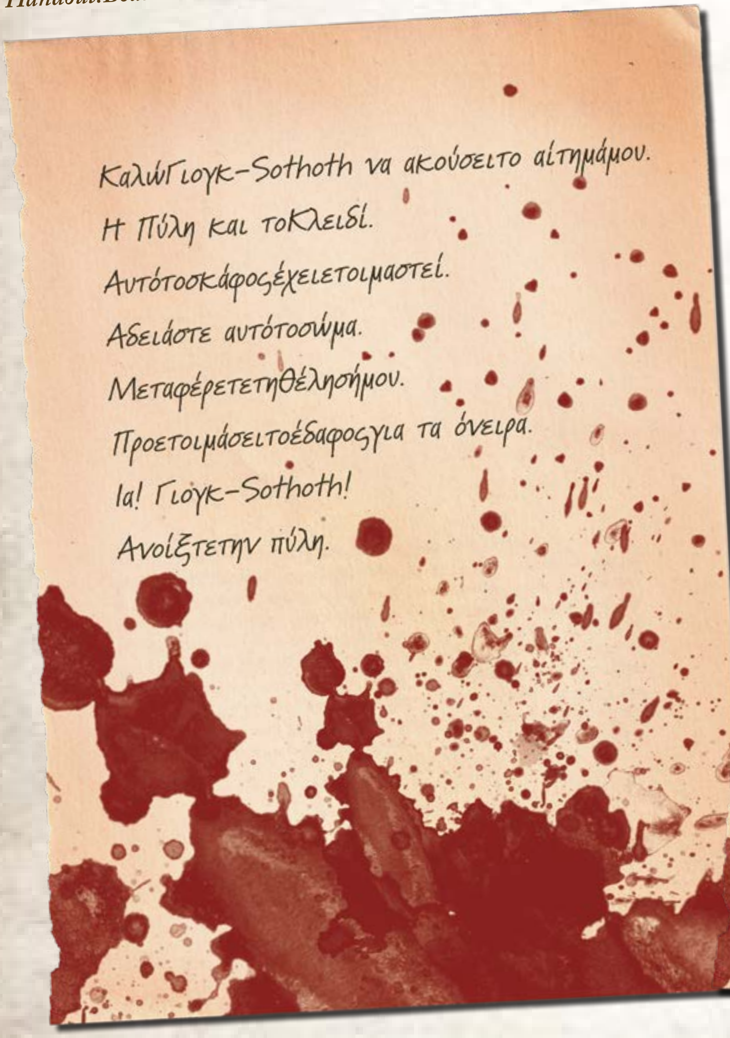
LOOKING AROUND THE ROOM

A cursory look around the room identifies the following objects. More details can be found if the relevant pieces of furniture are then searched.

The Wardrobe

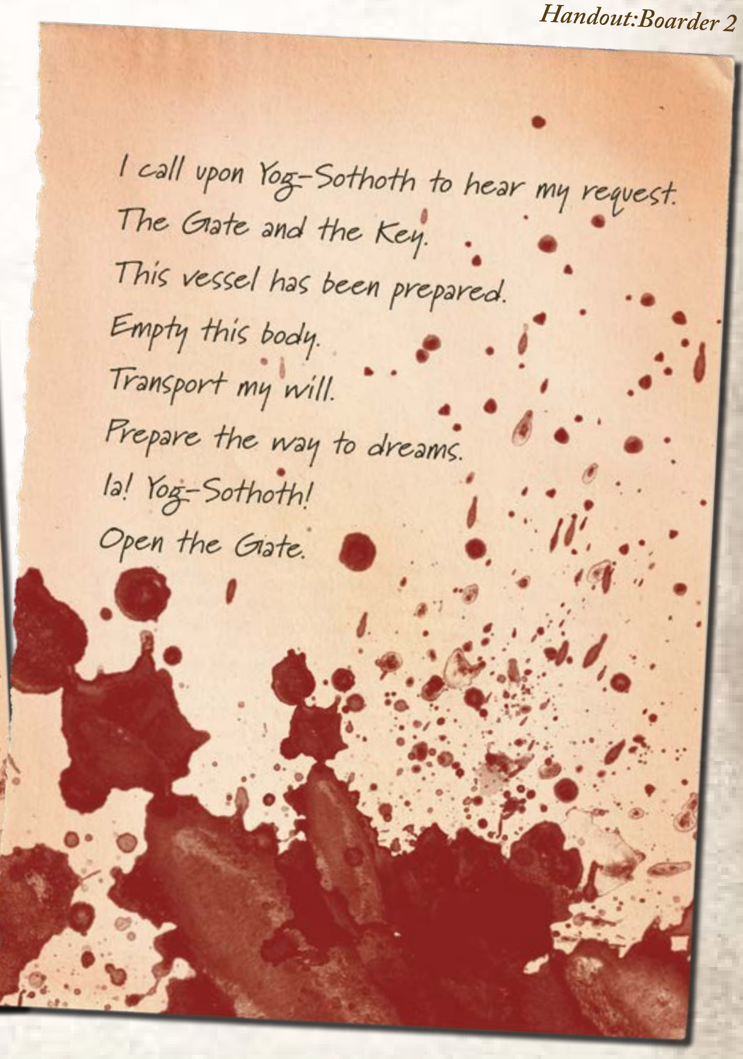
Searching inside reveals clothes, some shoes, and a locked wooden box, approximately 12 inches by 8 inches by 6 inches (30 cm by 20 cm by 15 cm). The key for the box is on the keychain in Gardiner's pocket, or it can be opened with a successful **Locksmith** or **STR** roll. If opened, it contains $128, a sewing kit, and personal grooming items. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll detects something shiny in a shoe at the bottom of the wardrobe. Looking closer, the shiny thing is a .32 revolver (1D8 damage), loaded with six bullets.

Handout:Boarder 1



ΚαλώΓιογκ-Sothoth να ακούσειτο αίτημάμου.
Η Πύλη και τοΚλειδί.
Αυτότοσκάφοςέχειετοιμαστεί.
Αδειάστε αυτότοσώμα.
Μεταφέρετετηθέλησήμου.
Προετοιμάσειτοέδαφοςγια τα όνειρα.
Ια! Γιογκ-Sothoth!
Ανοίξτετην πύλη.

Handout:Boarder 2



I call upon Yog-Sothoth to hear my request.
The Gate and the Key.
This vessel has been prepared.
Empty this body.
Transport my will.
Prepare the way to dreams.
Ia! Yog-Sothoth!
Open the Gate.

Keeper note: all of the investigators would know that $128 is enough to cover the $15 a month room-and-half-board for eight months—and any of the investigators might see an opportunity to pocket the money. You might use a secret note to tell the player whose investigator is searching the wardrobe that they've found the cash, and to ask them if they want to tell the others about it or just pocket it for themselves.

The Bed

The bed is tidily made, although there is a depression in the pillow, as if someone slept on top of the covers. A pair of slippers and a pair of brown shoes are placed neatly beneath the bed.

The Nightstand

By the lamp on the nightstand is an old book, *The Dreamer's Dictionary* (sought by the Bookstore Owner, if they are in play). In the nightstand's drawer is a slim journal (**Gardiner's Dream Journal**), along with a small corked bottle of liquid, and a small vial containing an off-white powder.

Keeper note: the substances are laudanum (bottle) and cocaine (vial), which any doctor or pharmacist can easily identify. The investigators can determine what these substances are with a **First Aid**, **Medicine**, **Science (Pharmacy)**, or Hard **Know** roll.

The Ornate Bookcase

The bookcase is finely carved and has glass-fronted doors; carved into the upright moldings that support the doors on either side are the busts of two flute-playing cherubs. There is a drawer at the bottom of the unit, which contains a clean bedsheet and pillowcase. All of the woodwork is detailed in intricate scroll work. A successful **Appraise** roll reveals that the bookcase is worth $75.

On the shelves there are books on finance and banking, a few travel books for obscure places, and some occult books, including:

- *Myths and Legends of Ancient Greece and Rome*, by E.M. Berens.
- *The Interpretation of Dreams*, by Sigmund Freud (in German).

The top shelf does not have enough books to fill it, so a bookend has been used to keep the books upright. The bookend is a monstrous thing, some sort of human-like squid creature. If touched, it feels cold and slimy, and there is a tingling sensation—whoever touched it must make a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss) as they suddenly experience a brief vision of an underwater scene where indistinct and gigantic dark forms provoke a sense of dread. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll identifies the creature as the Great Old One, Cthulhu. A successful **Appraise** roll reveals that the horrid bookend is worth $50; however, to make that appraisal, the investigator must handle the sculpture and risk their Sanity in the process.

If the bookcase is searched, a secret compartment may be found. A successful **INT** roll determines that the space between the drawer at the bottom of the bookcase and the bottom shelf is too big—there is possibly a second, secret, drawer there; however, removing the bottom drawer and feeling about in the gap fails to reveal a way into any hidden compartment. A successful **Spot Hidden** or **Art/Craft (Woodworking)** roll uncovers a button hidden in the scrollwork on the front of the bookcase. Pushing the button releases a secret panel in the rear of the unit.

GARDINER'S DREAM JOURNAL

English, handwritten by James Gardiner, c. 1931

This is a record of Gardiner's dreams he experienced while under the influence of the Entity from Beyond. An initial skim reading takes about five minutes and reveals that Gardiner was obsessed with returning to a place called the "Dreamlands." He was frustrated that he no longer seemed able to travel to this place while asleep. Entry after entry is filled with frustration or simply reads, "No dreams again." Then, toward the end of the journal, there are numerous descriptions of vivid dreams where Gardiner talks about meeting a "powerful being" who has promised him a path into the land of dream if certain rituals are performed. In addition, Gardiner describes how his dreams make a text he calls "the Tome" more understandable.

With a successful **Occult** or **Cthulhu Mythos** roll, the reader can determine that Gardiner was experiencing dreams where he was indeed in contact with some sort of dream entity or person. While the unnamed person seems to change their appearance in the varying dreams, it seems to be the same entity throughout. Whoever or whatever it was, it obviously had a lasting influence on Gardiner, driving him to delve into the dark arts.

- **Sanity loss:** 1 point
- **Occult:** +2 percentiles

Keeper note: the players may end up in a situation where they know there is a secret compartment but can't find it due to poor skill rolls. Remember they could try to push the roll or use Luck points to adjust it. If pushed, ask what extra they are doing to find the secret compartment (taking more time, knocking the wood to find a hollow sound, and so on) If a pushed roll is made but failed, allow them to find the compartment but have the investigator concerned catch their fingers on a wooden splinter, causing a gash in their skin and 1 hit point damage.

Inside the secret compartment can be found:

- A book: *Primer in Greek Vocabulary* (one of the Bookstore Owner's missing books).
- Two accounting ledgers and forged receipts (which the Business Associate is looking for, if they are in play).
- An obsidian knife, identical to the one that may be found under Gardiner's body.
- Wrapped in silk cloth, a book written in Greek named *The Book of Dream Memories* (see **The Book of Dream Memories**, page 71).

If a few minutes are spent looking over the ledgers, a successful **Accounting** roll shows that Gardiner had produced a false ledger that hides several crucial transactions. Should anyone other than the Business Associate succeed in the roll while looking at the ledgers, it is apparent that the ledgers belong to the Business Associate, thereby implicating them in shady business practices and some sort of dubious relationship with Gardiner.

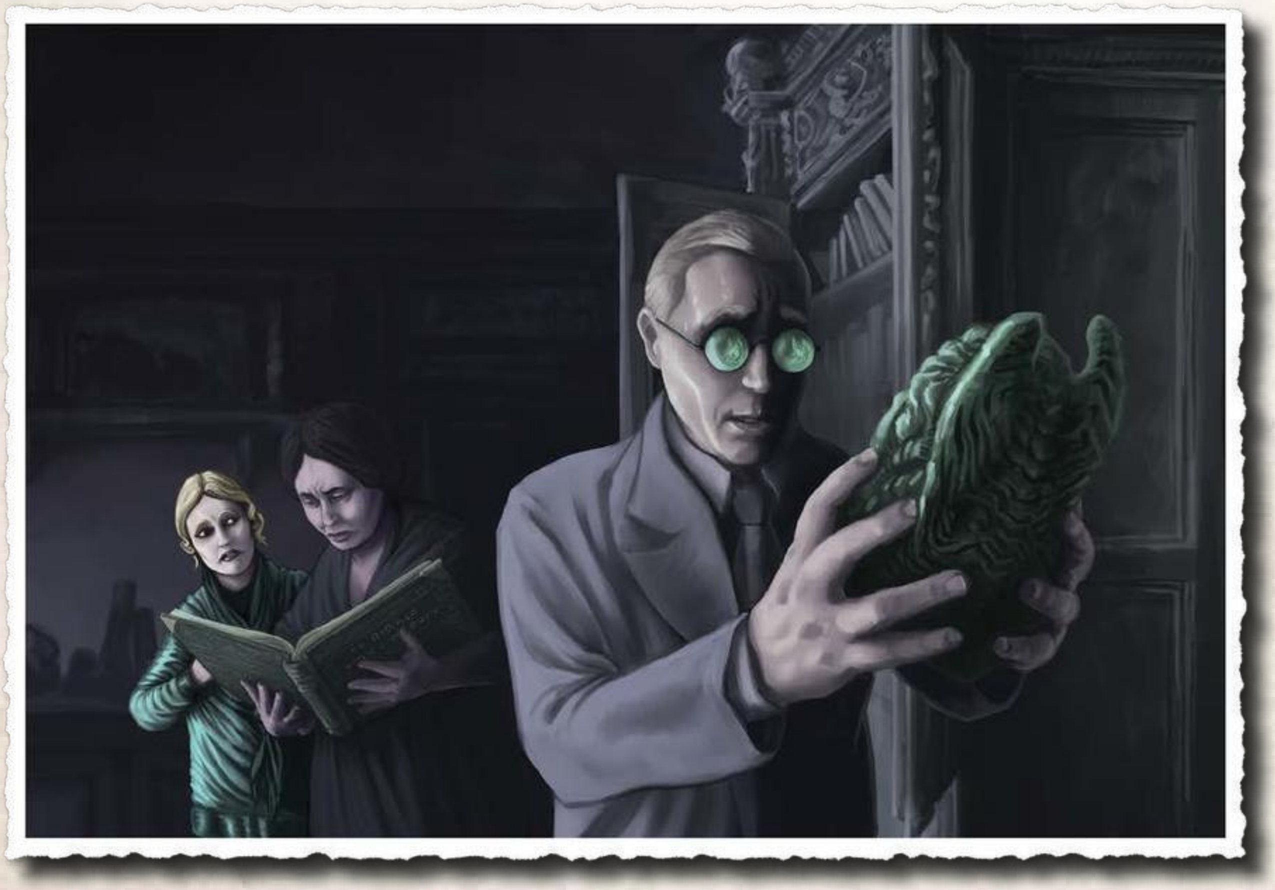
Keeper note: even if no one is playing the Business Associate, the investigators who are there still find the ledgers and receipts. Now, though, they merely reveal that Gardiner was mixed up in all sorts of dubious practices before his death. If one of the investigators happens to be a friend or family member of the Business Associate, then this paperwork might just bring about a startling revelation as to what the Business Associate actually does for a living.

The Window

Dried blood spots fleck the curtains and glass of the latched window. There is a small radiator beneath the window frame, also spattered with blood—all consistent with the way Gardiner died.

The Table and Two Wooden Chairs

The table can accommodate two people. There is a place setting in front of one chair, but otherwise, the table is bare.



The ornate bookcase

The Upholstered Chair

Threadbare and worn, with a style dating back 20 years—at least! The cushion is compressed from frequent use.

The Cabinets and Counter

A row of cabinets, at head height, across the width of the room. Beneath the cabinets, built into the wall, is a counter top, on which is a new-looking electric hot plate.

If the investigators decide to go poking about in the cabinets, ask the first person to open a cupboard door to make a **Dodge** roll to avoid being hit by a jar of pennies that falls out as soon as they do so. If the Dodge roll is failed, the investigator suffers 1 point of damage. Either way, the jar smashes, and glass and pennies go everywhere. Inside the cabinets are yet more jars containing assorted items, as well as baskets and cloth bags containing various vegetables and other foodstuffs.

The Long Table by the Door

On the table are piles of organized correspondence, along with an attractive wooden holder for paper, pens, and envelopes. A man's hat sits on the corner of the table. Examining the letters reveals the following information.

- A note from the Business Associate asking Gardiner if the ledgers have been finished. It implores Gardiner to make haste as they need the books back as soon as possible. The letter is dated June 14th (seven days ago).
- A letter from Gardiner's bank manager in Scotland regarding the dwindling funds in his account. The letter warns that unless measures are taken to address the situation, Gardiner's account will be cleared out within the next six months.
- A range of unopened correspondence. The letters concern various mundane matters and come from an assortment of domestic, Scottish, and English senders, as well as some from further afield. If necessary, the Keeper should feel free to make up the details for any of these letters—and possibly plant seeds for future adventures.

THE BOOK OF DREAM MEMORIES

Keeper note: bear in mind that Gardiner's animated body should rise to initiate a fight scene at the climax of the game, so there may not be enough time for the investigators to closely examine *The Book of Dream Memories*. Ideally, one of the investigators should be holding the book when the Gardiner-Thing rises—thus, making themselves a target.

Hidden in the secret compartment of the bookcase is *The Book of Dream Memories*. Written in Greek, it is the barely coherent account of an Irish monk from the 9th century CE describing the dreams he experienced after reading some ancient scrolls discovered while cleaning out the monastery's library. This 1658 edition of the book is a later reproduction of the original, bound in cracked and worn leather and frail with age. A bookmark has been placed in the book, noting a page of interest.

If taking a few moments to skim the text, the following information may be found, as determined by the listed skill rolls.

Language (Ancient Greek/Greek) roll (Regular success):

- The details are confusing (as one might expect of transcribed dreams).
- The writer claims to be making regular visits in his dreams to a place he calls the "Dream Land."
- It suggests that the writer was having dreams in which they were reading a "dream book." Sections of *The Book of Dream Memories* appear to be an attempt to write down what was seen in this "dream book."
- Where the bookmark is placed, there seem to be instructions on how to enter this dream realm. The writing on the scrap of paper near the body is the same as on this page of the book.
- Near to this page are diagrams showing spiral shapes drawn upon a human body (just like the ones on Gardiner's corpse).

Language (Ancient Greek/Greek) roll (Hard success):

- As above, plus there are clearly chants and instructions written down. One seems to be a magical means of entering the Dream Land. It involves an obsidian knife and speaking aloud the chant found on the bookmarked page, while the "petitioner" must "free thy mind from thy fleshy prison," and "render thy body still" (i.e. sacrifice their body and commit suicide).
- The page showing the spiral diagrams appears to be another ritual, which the petitioner must first perform to ensure "thy vessel is pure and prepared as living armor."

Occult or **Cthulhu Mythos** roll (Regular success):

- Looking at the spiral diagrams, it seems to suggest that inscribing the spirals on a body purifies the body but could also be some form of protective ward, perhaps making the flesh invulnerable or protected from certain forms of harm.
- If someone has succeeded in their **Language (Ancient Greek/Greek)** roll, an **Occult** roll can also confirm that many cultures have a belief in a dream realm or spirit world.

Keeper note: as already mentioned (**Background**, page 60), the book is cursed. Those reading it may, ultimately, fall under the spell of the Entity trapped in the Dreamlands, the restless spirit of an ancient sorcerer, who seeks to open a portal so it may cross into the physical world. Such events may occur again if the investigators survive this scenario and manage to study the book in greater depth, which may lead to further scenarios of your own designing.

The book contains two spells, which Gardiner performed. The first is a spell to convert flesh into a magical armor through ritual scarification (**Prepare the Body**, see the box below). The second spell (**Travel to Dream Lands**, see the box below) enables the trapped Entity to escape its current confinement and be released, possessing the body of the person performing the ritual. Thus, combined, the spells prepare an empty vessel for the Entity to inhabit. Gardiner was tricked into believing these spells would send his consciousness into the Dreamlands, but, instead, his body now lies waiting for the Entity's arrival at midday.

THE BOOK OF DREAM MEMORIES

Greek, author unknown Irish monk, 1658

Full study might allow the reader to modify the Travel To Dream Lands spell to banish the Entity (if it had already passed through into this world); however, there is not enough time in this scenario to accomplish this, although if running a longer version of this scenario, the Keeper might wish to factor such events into play.

- **Sanity Loss:** 1D6
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** +2/+4 percentiles
- **Mythos Rating:** 18
- **Study:** 15 weeks
- **Spells:** Prepare the Body (Flesh Ward variant), Travel to Dream Lands (Mind Transfer variant)

SPELLS

Prepare the Body (Flesh Ward variant)

- **Cost:** variable POW; variable CON; 1D4 Sanity points
- **Casting time:** 2 weeks

Creates magical armor around the caster. Unlike Flesh Ward (*Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 259) the armor endures and does not deplete each round (as the protection is ablated). This version of the spell is costly, requiring 10 POW and 10 CON per point of protection provided. The caster must, through scarification, inscribe "swirls" on their body. When the caster is struck, the swirls glow with a pale blue light and reduce any damage by the amount of protection invested.

The scarification is usually applied over a length of time, so the caster, if they choose, may elect to forego applying the effect to certain areas (such as the head) to speed up preparation for the spell. Areas not covered with the required scarification are unprotected by the ward.

Travel to Dream Lands (Mind Transfer variant)

- **Cost:** 10 magic points; 1D10 Sanity points
- **Casting time:** 5 rounds

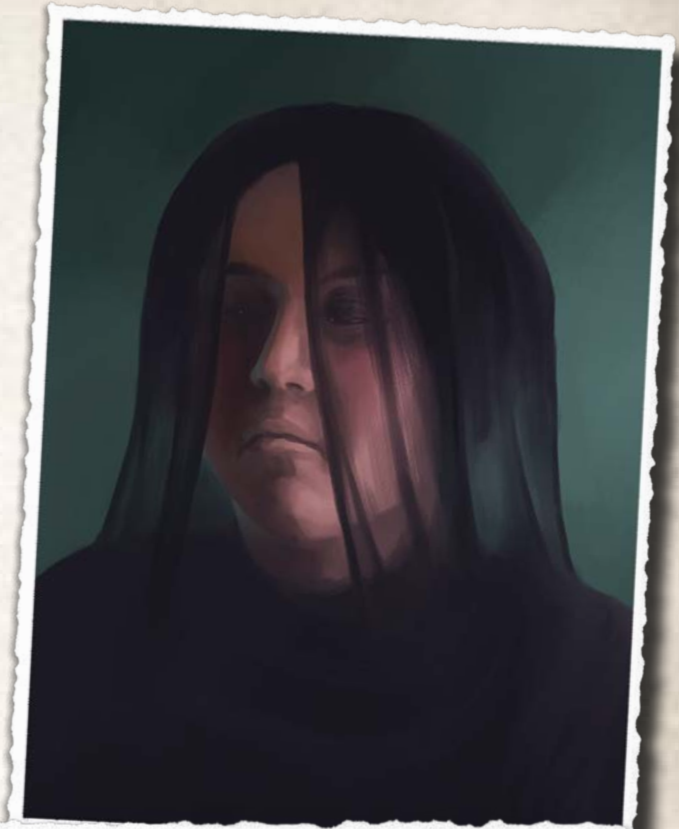
This spell variant purports to permanently send the consciousness of the caster to the Dreamlands, leaving their physical body an empty shell. However, this version of the spell is, in fact, a trap. The caster must "render thy body still," a euphemism for suicide, which must be performed with an obsidian knife. With the caster dead, an external entity can now take possession of the caster's body while the caster's consciousness is transported to goodness knows where.

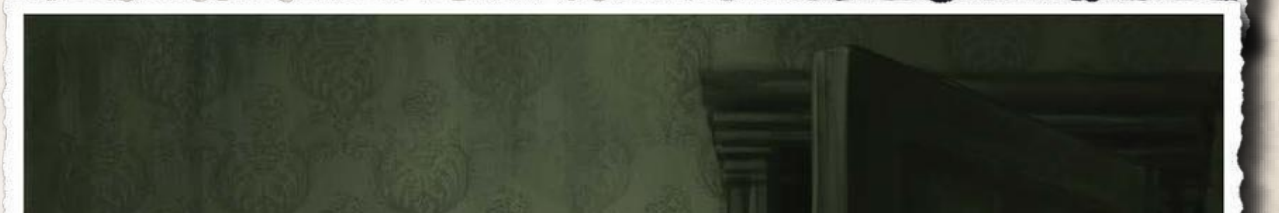
SPEAKING TO MRS.MADEIRA

The investigators may wish to speak to Mrs. Madeira, Gardiner's neighbor across the hall. Getting Mrs. Madeira to talk requires a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, **Persuade**, or **Intimidate** roll—although she does not have the best relationship with the Nosy Neighbor—and if that character is talking to her, any of the aforementioned rolls are at Hard difficulty.

Note that if another investigator is doing the talking but the Nosy Neighbor is with them, the other investigator can attempt a **Psychology** roll to figure out that Mrs. Madeira doesn't like the Nosy Neighbor. Thus, if the Nosy Neighbor is prodded to leave the conversation, the other investigator receives one bonus die to their social skill roll to get the young lady to talk.

If a social skill roll is failed and the player wishes to push the roll, ask what they are doing to press Mrs. Madeira—for instance, complimenting her (**Charm**), threatening her (**Intimidate**), bamboozling her (**Fast Talk**), and so on. If a pushed roll is failed, Mrs. Madeira slams the door shut





Above: Mrs. Madeira
Left: Speaking to Mrs. Madeira

in their faces and refuses to speak to that particular person again. Another investigator might now try their hand, but any social skill roll then made is at Hard difficulty (or with a penalty die at the Keeper's choice).

In talking to Mrs. Madeira, ask the player(s) what questions they wish to put to her. Some likely responses follow.

What Mrs. Madeira knows:

- She almost never hears anything from Gardiner's room; although, on occasion, she thinks she has heard him saying nighttime prayers. Never any music or conversations, though. He rarely leaves his room.
- Mr. Gardiner seems to have taken early retirement or perhaps lost his job, as he doesn't ever seem to leave for work.
- For the past two days and nights, she has seen no visitors at all.
- She has heard no sound of a struggle or a fight.
- Two nights ago, around 10:00 pm, she did hear some singing coming from his room. It sounded like Gardiner's voice, but the words were strange and unusual—not English. It ended suddenly before she thought to complain about the late-night noise.

THE MONSTER RISES!

At an appropriate moment, once the investigators have had time to look around the room and examine the body and other things of interest, and—possibly—spoken to Mrs. Madeira, Gardiner's body becomes possessed by the Entity and rises.

Read or paraphrase the following, modifying the text as necessary, depending on what the investigators have done so far with the body (e.g. if the body was wrapped in the tarpaulin, when it rises, it tears through the covering, and so on):

A dragging sound on the floor interrupts your investigation of the room. The mutilated body of the room's tenant shifts its limbs and suddenly lurches to a standing position. You look on in terror as the flesh around Mr. Gardiner's head begins to peel, spiraling downward like some horrific party trick with an apple. The blood-slicked skull turns to look in your direction. There is pure malevolence in its lidless eyes.

Keeper note: if one of the investigators is holding *The Book of Dream Memories* when the Gardiner-Thing rises, it stands, turns, and looks directly at them.

Seeing the undead hulk rise provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss). Temporary insanity is a possibility if someone loses 5 or 6 points from a failed roll at this point (see **Sanity** in the **Introduction**, page 11). If they then fail their **INT** roll as well, roll or select a result from the **Bout of Madness** table (*Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, page 17, or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 157), or use the suggestions in the **Insane Investigators** box (page 75). If using existing or newly-created investigators, use elements of their backstory to come up with an appropriate bout of madness.

TAKING ON THE MONSTER

The creature that was once James Gardiner lusts after *The Book of Dream Memories* above all other things. Taking the book from anyone that possesses it and then smiting them for daring to touch it are the creature's primary goals.

Once it has manifested, the monster begins by using its Song of Lost Dreams ability (see **Gardiner-Thing: Special Powers**, page 77). Following this, its priority is to get the book and disable anyone firing a gun or attacking it. Once able, it lurches out of the room and seeks refuge elsewhere.

All of the pre-generated investigators have a higher DEX than the monster. After dealing with the initial Sanity roll (and the involuntary actions that ensue from failure), the investigators should be able to undertake one action before the song can stun them. They may have already grabbed potential weapons during their search but, if not, call for **Luck** rolls to determine how easy it is for them to reach nearby weapons.

The players are free to do whatever they want: fight, flee, drop the book, yell for help, and so on. It is possible to survive this encounter by letting the monster depart with the book—especially if no one is currently holding it; however, given the creature's intent and the players' reactions, it is likely they will want to keep the book from it.

The monster's magical protection (**Prepare the Body** spell, page 72) should become evident once an attack strikes home but causes little to no damage—describe the blows striking the body and how the scars glow with a pale blue light, but add that the creature only wavers for an instant before pressing the attack, shrugging off the hits as if they were bee stings. Ask investigators who successfully score (what would otherwise be) a significant wound to make an **INT** roll: success reveals the monster is somehow protected when blows strike its arms or body—perhaps targeting its head, which is no longer covered by skin nor the swirls, might negate the protection?

Targeting the head requires the following:

- **Melee:** attack roll is made with a penalty die.
- **Firearms:** attack roll is made with a penalty die (which negates the bonus die for point-blank range); thus, the attack roll is at Regular difficulty.

Remember to use the outnumbered rule for combat—multiple investigators attacking the single creature gain a bonus die to their individual attacks, possibly giving them an edge to take the monster down (especially if they know to target the unprotected head). The outnumbered rule only applies to melee attacks and not to gunfire (*Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, page 20, or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*, page 108). Also, be aware that this is very close quarters. Anyone with a gun is firing at point-blank range (and likely firing into melee). Reviewing the firearm rules before play begins is highly recommended (*Call of Cthulhu Starter Set*, **Book 2**, page 19, or the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook,* page 113).

Ultimately, the monster must depend on its magical armor to survive a concerted attack by the investigators. It is likely that one or more investigators will be disabled through combat or the loss of Sanity points before they can beat the creature down.

Should they flee as a group, the monster pursues the book's holder, even if that person has already dropped it (it should become clear from this that the book is cursed and anyone who touched it is in line for the monster's wrath). Having four people run for a single door at the same time is likely to slow their escape long enough to have the monster attempt to grab the last person who touched the book.

The Police Arrive

If the investigators are faring badly against the monster or if you are reaching the end of the game session, the arrival of Tommy with the police can help bring proceedings to a close. If any of the investigators are dead or incapacitated, have them take on the police characters and roll their attacks (**The Police**, page 65; Officers Milligan and Malone's statistics can be found on page 76).

A couple of rounds of heated gunfire can either cause the monster to flee the scene, launching itself through the window into the street below, or kill it in a hail of bullets. The scene is over, and the investigators have (sort of) won the day.

INSANE INVESTIGATORS

Each of the pre-generated investigators' starting Sanity points and the amount they must lose to go indefinitely insane are provided below. Should insanity occur, a possible bout of madness is suggested (each lasting for 1D10 rounds), as well as an initial involuntary action.

The Landlord/Landlady

- **SAN:** 60
- **Indefinite insanity:** 12+ points lost.
- **Involuntary action:** freezes on the spot.
- **Bout of madness:** suffers a delusion, believing the monster to be Ma Shanks and feeling that they must protect her. *"No, leave her alone! She's just not herself at the moment!"*

The Business Associate

- **SAN:** 60
- **Indefinite insanity:** 12+ points lost.
- **Involuntary action:** screams a particularly descriptive expletive.
- **Bout of madness:** descends into violence, attacking anyone nearby (ask for a **Luck** roll: if successful, the monster is targeted; otherwise, it's the nearest investigator). *"Stand still while I'm hitting you!"*

The Bookstore Owner

- **SAN:** 50
- **Indefinite insanity:** 10+ points lost.
- **Involuntary action:** begins babbling some sort of protective phrase they read in one of their occult books.
- **Bout of madness:** becomes obsessed with getting hold of or keeping a hold on *The Book of Dream Memories. "It's mine. Mine. Give it to me!"*

The Nosy Neighbor

- **SAN:** 50
- **Indefinite insanity:** 10+ points lost.
- **Involuntary action:** buries their face in their hands and lets out a strangled sob.
- **Bout of madness**: suffers from paranoia, believing that everyone is out to get them. *"You've always hated me, haven't you? Haven't you?"*

CONCLUSION

The scenario is likely to end with the monster dead or having escaped in a spectacular shower of broken glass as it dived through the window; that, or the investigators all dead and/or insane. If still living, the Gardiner-Thing may present further adventure for the investigators, with them trying to track it down and destroy it. Perhaps their continued research uncovers further details about the Dreamlands, a spell to banish the creature, or puts them into contact with some unsavory correspondents of Gardiner.

REWARDS

Each surviving investigator is awarded +1D6 Sanity points.

EPILOGUE

Remember to bring the game to a close with a short epilogue in order to tie up any loose ends that might remain, highlighting any successes the investigators had. If the investigators all manage to get away, then they live to fight the Mythos another day—a good resolution in *Call of Cthulhu*, depending on how much of their Sanity remains intact! The monster, if it escapes, shambles off to cause mayhem elsewhere.

In closing, if it's appropriate, perhaps you might wish to read or paraphrase the following:

Over the following weeks, you piece together the truth of the situation. James Gardiner enjoyed a vivid and fantastical dream life but somehow lost his ability to dream. He sought occult solutions to regain those dreams and found a spell in a tome that he believed would open the way for them to return. Unfortunately, the spell and the book were cursed.

Some strange entity from another world tricked Gardiner into performing the rituals he found in the tome. One prepared his body to become a vessel for the foul entity while the other led to his death, sending poor Gardiner's soul into oblivion. His empty body could then be possessed by the entity—just as your investigators discovered.

Due to your timely actions, you can feel proud to have played your part in foiling the schemes of a monster from beyond. Well done! Perhaps this incident has changed your investigator. If there are dark and unwholesome things out there that wish to break into our world, will your steadfast investigator join the fight to stop them?

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

The NPC and monster statistics are presented below.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Detective Lt. Milligan, *potential police backup*

STR 70	**CON** 65	**SIZ** 65	**DEX** 50	**INT** 60
APP 50	**POW** 50	**EDU** 75	**SAN** 50	**HP** 13
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 10	

Combat

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4
.32 revolver	50% (25/10), damage 1D8
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Skills

Intimidate 50%, Listen 40%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 35%.

Patrolman Malone, *everyday beat cop*

STR 70	**CON** 65	**SIZ** 65	**DEX** 60	**INT** 50
APP 50	**POW** 60	**EDU** 55	**SAN** 60	**HP** 13
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 12	

Combat

Brawl	60% (30/12) damage 1D3+1D4, or nightstick 1D6+1D4
.32 revolver	50% (25/10), damage 1D8
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Skills

Intimidate 50%, Listen 45%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 35%.

THE MONSTER

Gardiner-Thing, *monster from dreams*

The shambling, scarified wreck of the man that was once James Gardiner, now inhabited by the soul of the Entity from Beyond.

STR 90	**CON** 110	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 35	**INT** 80
APP —	**POW** 90	**EDU** —	**SAN** —	**HP** 17
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 18	

Special Powers

Song of Lost Dreams: the Gardiner-Thing pipes a dreadful whistling from its throat-orifice, causing those who hear its dire tune to become distracted (dazed). On the round the tune starts, those hearing it must each succeed in an opposed POW roll or become dazed for 1D3 rounds. When dazed, the listener is distracted, suffering a penalty die to all skill rolls, and may not initiate an attack (but may dodge or fight back). At the end of 1D3 rounds, the dazed investigator must make a Sanity roll due to the otherworldly visions they have witnessed (1/1D3 loss).

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (fist, grab book, or special power).

Fighting: the monster's initial attack is always using its Song of Lost Dreams special power. It then attempts to retrieve the book and attack anyone who has been in contact with it or who is assaulting its current vessel. Once it has the book, it attempts to flee.

Grab book (mnvr): if the book is currently being held by a character, the monster attempts to grab it from them. If the grab attempt is successful, on the following round, the Gardiner-Thing may wrestle the book from the target's grasp with a successful opposed STR roll. The investigator may, on their next DEX action, initiate a new opposed STR roll to pull the book free of the monster. Note that a dazed investigator does not suffer a penalty die to the opposed roll to maintain a hold on the book.

Fighting	50% (25/10), damage 1D6+1D4
Grab book (mnvr)	50% (25/10), grabs book and may wrestle it free on following round (see above)
Dodge	17% (8/3)

Skills

Climb 50%, Listen 40%, Spot Hidden 35%, Stealth 40%.

Armor: 5-point ritually scarred skin (spell Prepare the Body, provides 5 armor points); each time damage is absorbed, magical blue lines trace the scars at the point of the would-be injury. The magical armor is ineffective against hits specifically targeting the head.
Spells: Prepare the Body.
Sanity loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see the Gardiner-Thing.

Name:

The Landlord or Landlady*, *age 38*

STR 50 **CON** 70 **SIZ** 80 **DEX** 50 **INT** 60
APP 40 **POW** 60 **EDU** 50 **SAN** 60 **HP** 15
DB: +1D4 **Build:** 1 **Move:** 7 **MP:** 12 **Luck:**

Luck: roll 3D6 and multiply result by five.

Combat

Fighting (Brawl)	50% (25/10), damage 1D3+1D4
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Skills

Art/Craft (Cooking)	25% (12/5)
Art/Craft (Painting)	60% (30/12)
Art/Craft (Plumbing)	40% (20/8)
Charm	15% (7/3)
Climb	20% (10/4)
Credit Rating	50% (25/10)
Electrical Repair	30% (15/6)
Firearms (Handgun)	40% (20/8)
First Aid	30% (15/6)
Intimidate	70% (35/14)
Jump	20% (10/4)
Language (English)	50% (25/10)
Language (Portuguese)	50% (25/10)
Listen	20% (10/4)
Locksmith	40% (20/8)
Mechanical Repair	35% (17/7)
Persuade	10% (5/2)
Psychology	60% (30/12)
Sleight of Hand	10% (5/2)
Spot Hidden	45% (22/9)
Stealth	25% (12/5)
Throw	25% (12/5)

**Decide what gender your character is (or passes as). Whether their love for Gardiner is forbidden love due to your gender selection or simply unrequited love is up to you.*

Backstory

You live in Providence, Rhode Island, in Ma Shanks' Boarding House, a three-story building, where you run things on behalf of Ma Shanks, the elderly owner of the property.

You are widowed and now it's just you and your 11-year-old son Tommy, who you love very much. Because you lost your own spouse, you sympathize with Mrs. Madeira, who lives across the hall from another of your tenants, Mr. Gardiner. (Her husband was killed in an industrial accident last March.) You know all of the other tenants in the building to different degrees: the Bookstore Owner, the Business Associate, and the Nosy Neighbor (all player characters), as well as the Skirgaila family (Lithuanian brothers and sisters who are, for the most part, hard workers, with jobs in the city).

You wish to find love again, and perhaps you have. James Gardiner—Mrs. Madeira's neighbor—has lived in the boarding house for around two years. He has utterly captured your heart. True, he's not acted to reciprocate your love, but deep down, you know that, somehow, he loves you too. You are the only one in the boarding house that he spends time with, the only one that he talks to, even if your talks are rare. Should anything happen to your adored tenant you would rain down vengeance on that person. No one would escape your wrath if he were slighted or injured. You would do anything within your power to seek that person out for special punishment.

Strangely, James has not been seen for two days, although that's not unusual. He prefers to work and makes his own meals in his room. But, despite your knocking, there's been no answer at his door. You are getting concerned and some of the other tenants appear to want to talk to James, too. So, you have agreed to unlock the door to his room, to check he's okay.

- **Traits:** highly protective of those you care for; lonely and in search of love.
- **Ideology/beliefs**: everyone deserves a second chance.
- **Significant people:** your son, Tommy. He means the absolute world to you.

Roleplaying hooks

You have a personal desire to make sure James Gardiner is okay. You are secretly in love with James Gardiner.

Possessions

Master key for the building.

Name:

The Bookstore Owner, *age 29*

STR 60	**CON** 50	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 40	**INT** 70
APP 50	**POW** 50	**EDU** 80	**SAN** 45	**HP** 11
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 10	**Luck:**

Luck: roll 3D6 and multiply result by five.

Combat

Fighting (Brawl)	45% (22/9), damage 1D3
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Accounting	20% (10/4)
Art/Craft (Pottery)	25% (12/5)
Anthropology	50% (25/10)
Appraise	40% (20/8)
Archaeology	50% (25/10)
Charm	30% (15/6)
Climb	20% (10/4)
Credit Rating	40% (20/8)
Cthulhu Mythos	5% (2/1)
Dream Interpretation	25% (12/5)
Firearms (Handgun)	20% (10/4)
First Aid	30% (15/6)
History	60% (30/12)
Intimidate	15% (7/3)
Jump	20% (10/4)
Language (Ancient Greek)	40% (20/8)
Language (English)	80% (40/16)
Library Use	60% (30/12)
Listen	40% (20/8)
Natural World	50% (25/10)
Occult	70% (35/14)
Persuade	10% (5/2)
Psychology	45% (22/9)
Sleight of Hand	10% (5/2)
Spot Hidden	45% (22/9)
Stealth	20% (10/4)
Throw	20% (10/4)

Backstory

You live in Providence, Rhode Island, in Ma Shanks' Boarding House. The Depression has hit your bookstore business very hard. You may have to give up your dream of selling rare books, all because the flow of orders has dropped to a trickle. Only one order from a collector has come in this month, but it is a significant one—however, there is one small problem.

Your business affords you the opportunity to read through all sorts of arcane books, typically of an occult bent. While most of your business is conducted with clients around the world, you have a special place in your heart for the local customers. A year ago, Mr. Gardiner, who actually lives in the same boarding house as you, approached you to help make contact with an estate sale of books. The small fee you earned was appreciated and you were able to pick up a few old tomes as well. Apparently, Mr. Gardiner got what he wanted and for a very reasonable price; although he never talked about what book he might have purchased.

Mr. Gardiner seemed obsessed with dreams. You both have talked on the subject at length in your store. You wouldn't really call him a friend but certainly a colleague. When he asked to borrow a few books from your store, you were happy to make a short-term loan. Unfortunately, one of the books you loaned him is the one the collector wishes to purchase. All you need to do is get the book back from Mr. Gardiner.

Compounding the problem is the fact that you've seen neither hide nor hair of Mr. Gardiner for a week. You've asked if the other tenants in your boarding house have seen Gardiner but none of them have, so you've asked the landlord to check up on him—giving you the chance to enter his room and find the book. After all, if this sale goes through, your shop will be able to stay open for at least another six months.

You have loaned James Gardiner the following books:

- *The Dreamer's Dictionary*, a rare 1815 first edition—this is the book the collector wants to buy.
- *Myths and Legends of Ancient Greece and Rome*, by E.M. Berens.
- *The Interpretation of Dreams*, by Sigmund Freud.
- *A Primer in Greek Vocabulary*.

- **Traits:** afraid you are about to lose the business you've worked so hard to build, but determined to save it, come what may.
- **Ideology/beliefs**: from everything you've read over the years, you're pretty certain there's more to life than mankind is currently aware of.
- **Meaningful locations**: your beloved bookstore.

Roleplaying hooks

Get *The Dreamer's Dictionary* back from Gardiner. Check that Gardiner is okay and not sick or something.

Possessions

Notebook, engraved fountain pen.

Name:

The Business Associate, *age 34*

STR 50	**CON** 40	**SIZ** 50	**DEX** 50	**INT** 80
APP 60	**POW** 60	**EDU** 70	**SAN** 60	**HP** 9
DB: 0	**Build:** 0	**Move:** 8	**MP:** 12	**Luck:**

Luck: roll 3D6 and multiply result by five.

Combat

Fighting (Brawl)	45% (22/9), damage 1D3
.25 Derringer (1B)	60% (30/12), damage 1D6
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Skills

Accounting	40% (20/8)
Appraise	50% (25/10)
Art/Craft (Business)	55% (27/11)
Art/Craft (Cooking)	50% (25/10)
Charm	50% (25/10)
Climb	20% (10/4)
Credit Rating	50% (25/10)
Drive Auto	40% (20/8)
Fast Talk	35% (17/7)
First Aid	50% (25/10)
Intimidate	30% (15/6)
Jump	20% (10/4)
Language (English)	70% (35/14)
Law	40% (20/8)
Listen	20% (10/4)
Mechanical Repair	20% (10/4)
Persuade	30% (15/6)
Psychology	40% (20/8)
Sleight of Hand	30% (15/6)
Spot Hidden	25% (12/5)
Stealth	60% (30/12)
Throw	30% (15/6)

Backstory

You live in Providence, Rhode Island, in Ma Shanks' Boarding House.

We all make decisions for the best of reasons. Sometimes, those decisions have long-lasting and dangerous consequences. Moving grain and other supplies into the city for making bootleg spirits has been a very lucrative business. You don't worry about being busted, as you aren't actually handling illegal hooch. All you have to do is get the materials required to the basements around the city where the production work is done.

Recently, a small mishap in another business venture left you temporarily short on funds. You had to juggle a little money from the Mob's expenses to temporarily cover your other debts. Simple. But complications followed, and you found yourself having to skim more money just to keep afloat.

You've always been able to acquire things for people (antiques, rare goods, and less than legal items). Sometimes, this little sideline has proved profitable. About a year ago, James Gardiner, who lives in the same boarding house as you, asked you to make use of your talents to acquire a pair of obsidian knives. "No questions asked," has always been your motto. In exchange, you asked Gardiner to "fix" your accounting ledger by creating a false ledger—something to show the Mob if "Double Barrel" Angelo comes calling to ask awkward questions about the missing money.

Problem is, no one has seen Gardiner in days. He's not answering knocks at the door. You need your receipts and the two ledgers. Only last night you heard that Angelo has been asking questions and mentioning your name. You've pestered the boarding house's landlord to open Gardiner's door under the pretense of checking he is okay—giving you a chance to follow inside and hopefully get your ledgers.

- **Traits**: once full of self-confidence, now you feel as if you're always looking over your shoulder.
- **Ideology/beliefs**: the Law is an ass, and it's every man for himself.
- **Significant people**: "Double Barrel" Angelo—he gave you your start in this business and you kind of feel bad about skimming from him. Plus, you fear what he'll do to you if he ever finds out.

Roleplaying hooks

Get into Gardiner's room and get your receipts and the two ledgers.

Possessions

.25 Derringer pistol, four spare bullets.

Name:

The Nosy Neighbor, *age 58*

STR 70	**CON** 50	**SIZ** 60	**DEX** 80	**INT** 60
APP 50	**POW** 50	**EDU** 40	**SAN** 50	**HP** 11
DB: +1D4	**Build:** 1	**Move:** 7	**MP:** 10	**Luck:**

Luck: roll 3D6 and multiply result by five.

Combat

Fighting (Brawl)	50% (25/10), damage 1D3+1D4
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Accounting	50% (25/10)
Art/Craft (Woodworking)	40% (20/8)
Charm	15% (7/3)
Climb	25% (12/5)
Credit Rating	20% (10/4)
Fast Talk	30% (15/6)
Firearms (Handgun)	20% (10/4)
Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun)	50% (25/10)
First Aid	50% (25/10)
Intimidate	15% (7/3)
Jump	20% (10/4)
Language (English)	40% (20/8)
Language (German)	60% (30/12)
Listen	20% (10/4)
Mechanical Repair	20% (10/4)
Natural World	60% (30/12)
Persuade	10% (5/2)
Psychology	15% (7/3)
Ride	40% (20/8)
Sleight of Hand	30% (15/6)
Spot Hidden	45% (22/9)
Stealth	40% (20/8)
Survival	70% (35/14)
Throw	25% (12/5)
Track	60% (30/12)

Backstory

You live in Providence, Rhode Island, in Ma Shanks' Boarding House. Your family is all grown up and moved away; your spouse died in the influenza epidemic twelve years ago. You know everyone in the house and make it your business to also know their business.

But James Gardiner, who lives on the third floor, is a mystery to you. Who is this man who thinks he can hide from you? Why is he so suspicious? Does he engage in illegal dealings? Is he up to no good in that room of his? He's lived here for nearly two years, but never once has he said more than a passing hello to you.

What you do know about Gardiner is that he hides in his room all of the time. Late at night, you've heard him reciting some odd-sounding poetry before going to bed. The poetry isn't in English and has had you wondering about what he's been doing in there.

But today, everyone seems to be talking about him. Apparently, no one has seen him for a few days and some are getting worried. Well, this sounds right up your street—time to put your detective hat on. The landlord is going to unlock his room to check on him; perhaps you can follow in and get a good look to see just what Gardiner has been up to.

What you know about the other tenants:

- The Landlord/Landlady (player character) and their 11-year-old son, Tommy: about the only person Gardiner seemed to bother with, apart from the Business Associate (although their friendship is a relatively recent thing).
- The Bookstore Owner (player character): owns a local bookstore of weird and old books.
- The Business Associate (player character): seems a shady one and never discusses exactly what line of work they're in.
- Ma Shanks: the frail and elderly building owner.
- Mrs. Madeira: lives across the hall from James Gardiner. Her husband died in an accident last March. She doesn't seem to like you.
- The Skirgaila family: Lithuanian brothers and sisters. Anikke, Dovana, and Konstantinas are hard workers, with jobs in the city. Petras, the other brother, just seems to hang around the room they share all day. Except today.

- **Traits:** some call you a nosy gossip, but you don't see it that way.
- **Ideology/beliefs**: a house is a community, so it's important to know everyone well.
- **Treasured Possessions:** your wedding ring and your spouse's cigarette lighter—it's about the only thing you have left of them (lately you've had to pawn the rest to help keep your head above water).

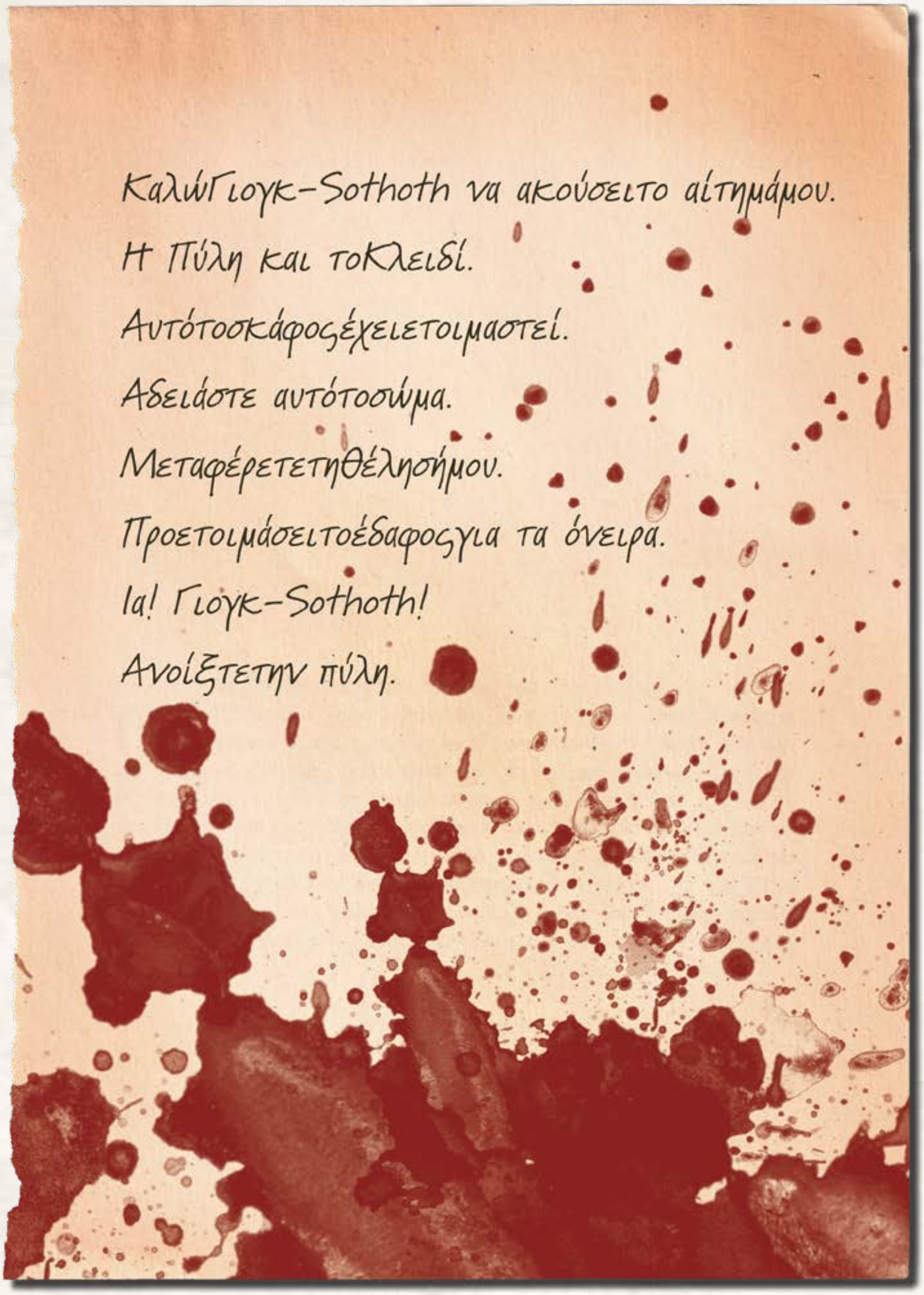
Roleplaying hooks

Find out what Gardiner has been up to in his room. See what gossip you can pick up on the other tenants. Things have been tough since you lost your job, so try to find a way to make your rent payments this month or convince the Landlord/Landlady to defer them.

Possessions

Cigarettes, lighter (your late spouse's).

COLLECTED PLAYER HANDOUTS



Handout: Boarder 1

ΚαλώΓιογκ-Sothoth να ακούσειτο αίτημάμου.

Η Πύλη και τοΚλειδί.

Αυτότοσκάφοςέχειετοιμαστεί.

Αδειάστε αυτότοσώμα.

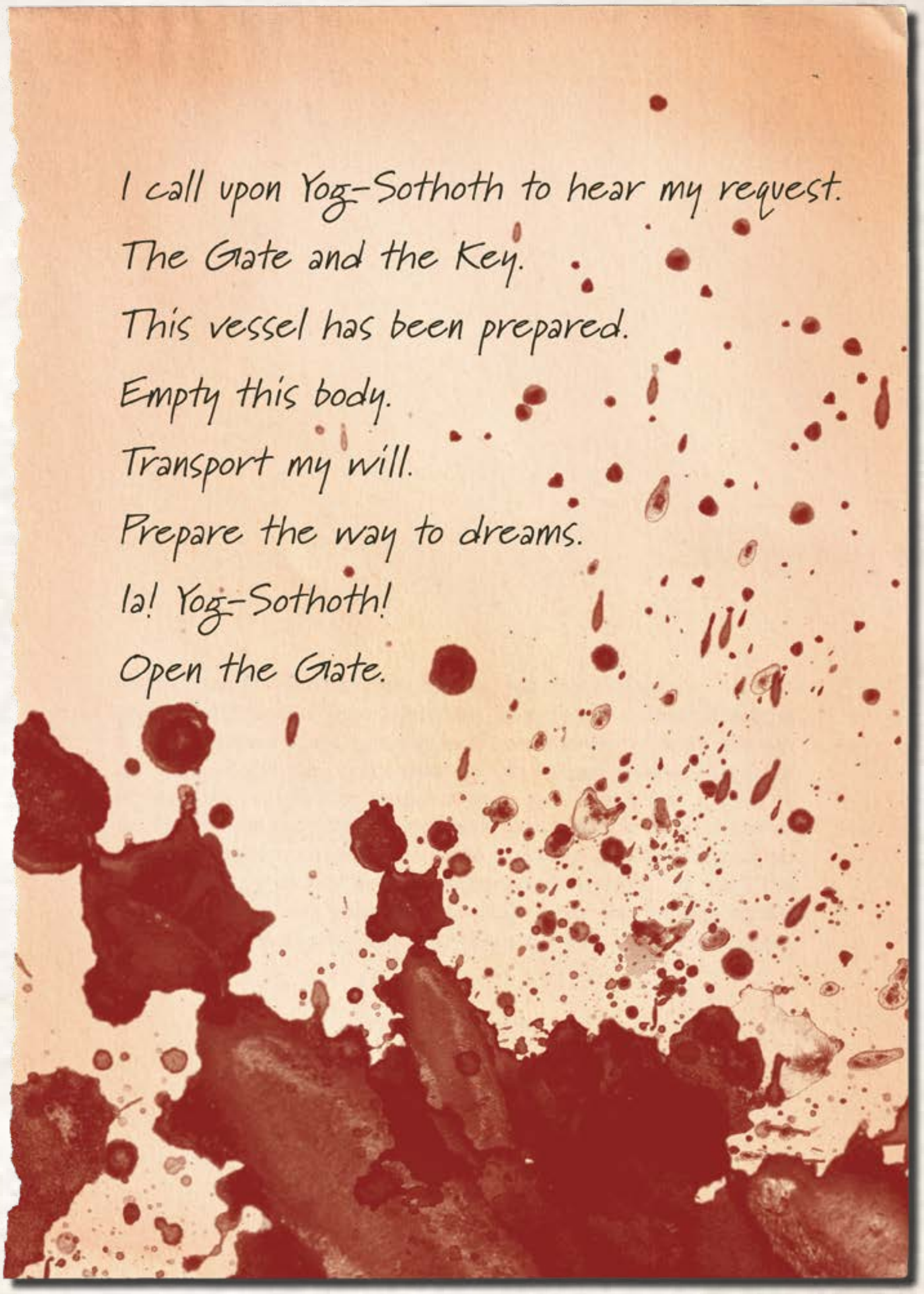
Μεταφέρετετηθέλησήμου.

Προετοιμάσειτοέδαφοςγια τα όνειρα.

Ια! Γιογκ-Sothoth!

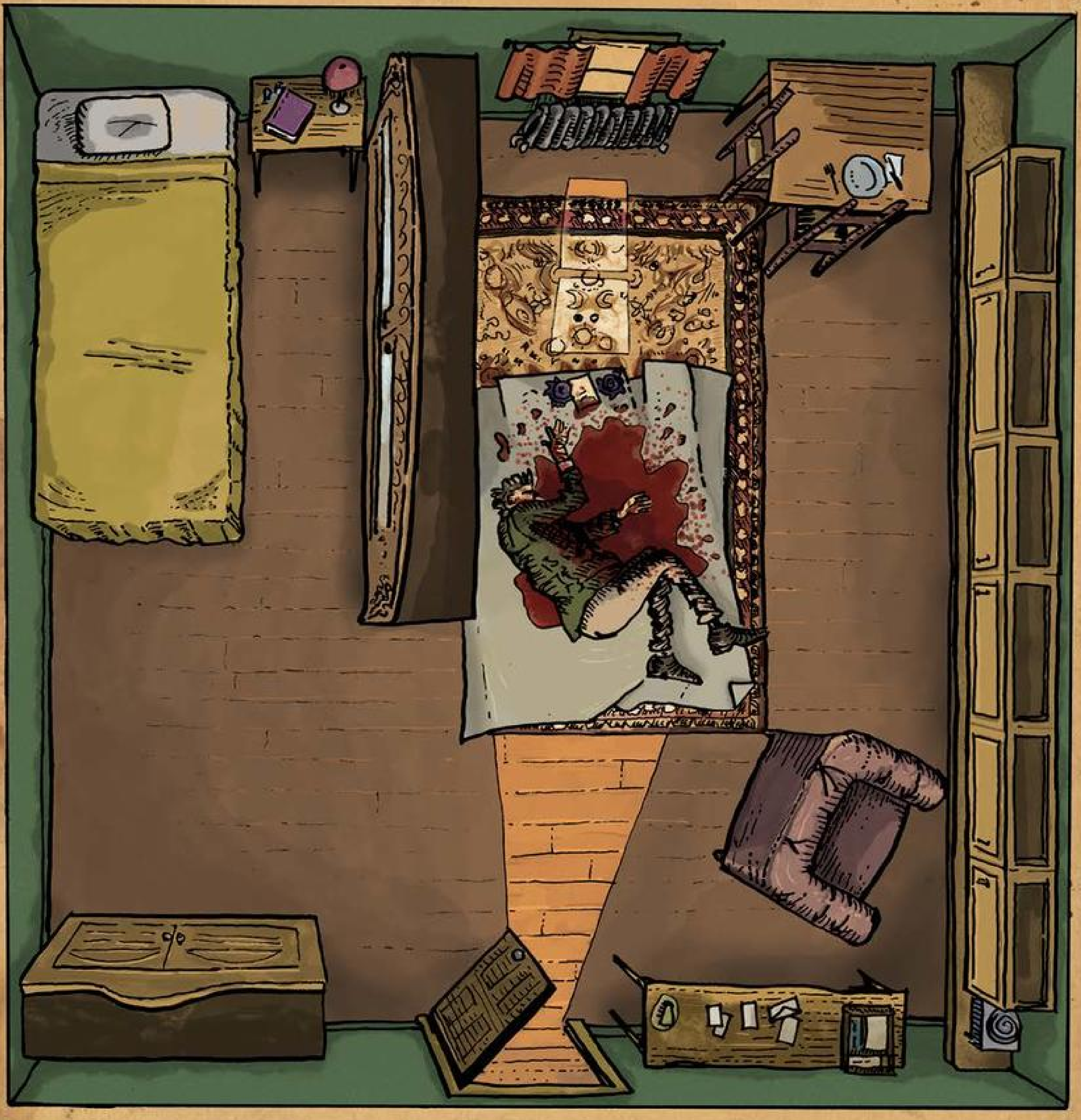
Ανοίξτετην πύλη.

Handout: Boarder 2



I call upon Yog-Sothoth to hear my request.
The Gate and the Key.
This vessel has been prepared.
Empty this body.
Transport my will.
Prepare the way to dreams.
Ia! Yog-Sothoth!
Open the Gate.

THE DEAD BOARDER



Player map for *The Dead Boarder*

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DOORS TO DARKNESS

FIVE SCENARIOS FOR BEGINNING KEEPERS

Doors To Darkness provides five scenarios written especially for beginning Keepers and players of Call of Cthulhu. Here you will find horror, mystery, investigation, ghastly monsters, strange magics, and forgotten secrets, as well as plenty of advice about how to run the adventures for best effect. As well as the scenarios, an essay by Kevin Ross details a wide range of hints and tips on running Call of Cthulhu - guidance any Keeper, new or experienced, will find very useful.

- *The Darkness Beneath The Hill* - A friend’s house renovation project leads to unexpected discoveries in Providence, Rhode Island.
- *Genius Loci* - Not all is well at Danvers State Lunatic Asylum and it’s down to the investigators to heed a friend in need’s cry.
- *Servants Of The Lake* - The hunt for a missing person reveals ancient secrets in the wilds north of Kingsport.
- *Ties That Bind* - Strange rock formations have been found in Mrs. Carrington’s prized fountain. But these are like no rocks seen before!
- *None More Black* - The death of a Miskatonic University student leads the investigators into unsavoury neighbourhoods and dark business dealings.

All are set in the 1920's, and with a little work maybe used in other eras.

Also included are ten diverse and ready to play investigators, allowing players to dive straight into the mysteries contained within Doors To Darkness. Lastly, just because these scenarios are written with new players in mind, don’t expect them to be a walk in the park! Those who dare to open the doors to darkness will discover just what secrets and dangers lie within! You must have a copy of the Call of Cthulhu Keeper Rulebook 7th Edition to fully enjoy these scenarios.

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What ancient horrors lie slumbering in a newly discovered tomb deep in Egypt's Valley of the Kings? Are you allowing local superstitions and the unfortunate events surrounding the opening of Tutankhamen's tomb to play on your mind as you wait to step down into the darkness…

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The Dead Boarder

And, what has happened to that nice, quiet neighbor of yours? You've not seen hide nor hair of him in days! He wasn't always the friendliest of sorts, but he did seem very pious, what with all the late-night prayers coming from his room…

Gateways to Terror contains three short-play scenarios for the *Call of Cthulhu* 7th Edition roleplaying game, ideal for beginning and experienced players and Keepers alike. Originally, all three—*The Necropolis*, *What's in the Cellar?* and *The Dead Boarder*—were designed as demonstration games to give a taste of the game's core motifs—mystery, investigation, and horror—for those with limited time. The scenarios can be played in as little as one hour but can be expanded for slightly longer play, and each comes with four ready-made investigators so you can jump right into the action! Each scenario includes hints and tips for Keepers new and old, suggestions for additional investigators for larger groups, and a summary of the key rules needed to play.

Suitable for use with the *Call of Cthulhu Starter Set* and the *Call of Cthulhu: Keeper Rulebook*. *Gateways to Terror* provides your next steps into the strange and mystifying worlds of *Call of Cthulhu*.

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